

BRYAN

BOOKS BY
M. R. WERNER

BARNUM
BRIGHAM YOUNG
TAMMANY HALL
BRYAN

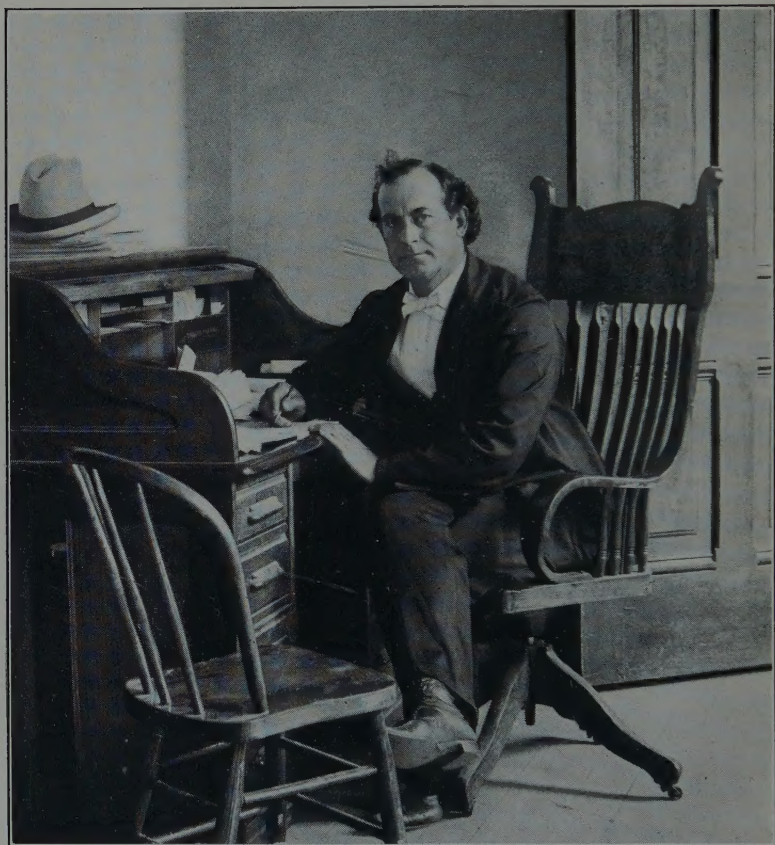


Photo by Underwood and Underwood.

WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN
LAWYER—POLITICIAN—ORATOR

From a photograph taken at his desk before 1896



BRYAN



BY M. R. WERNER



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KEENE STATE COLLEGE

TO
BERNARD WERNER

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CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES

THE SEEDS which gave life eventually to that phenomenon known finally as William Jennings Bryan were planted in England and Ireland, Virginia and Kentucky. In the preface to his *Memoirs* Bryan wrote: "I cannot trace my ancestry beyond the fourth generation and there is not among them, so far as I know, one of great wealth or great political or social prominence, but so far as I have been able to learn, they were honest, industrious, Christian, moral, religious people—not a black sheep in the flock, not a drunkard, not one for whose life I would have to utter an apology."

Silas Lillard Bryan, the father of William Jennings Bryan, was born in Culpeper County, Virginia, on November 4, 1822. He was left an orphan at an early age, and when he was nineteen years old he settled in the State of Illinois. He entered McKendree College at Lebanon, Illinois, and finally made his home at Salem, Illinois, where he began the practice of law. When he was thirty years old, he was elected to the Senate of the State of Illinois on the Democratic ticket, and he served in the Senate for eight years. In 1861 he was elected a judge of the Second Judicial Circuit of Illinois, and he served two terms.

Bryan's mother, Mariah Elizabeth Jennings, was born into an English family who had settled so long in the United States that it was impossible for Bryan to trace them in Europe. Miss Jennings's grandfather had removed

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to Illinois from Maysville, Kentucky, early in the eighteenth century. Mariah Elizabeth Jennings married Silas Lillard Bryan when she was eighteen, and she moved into a house in Salem, Illinois, which her husband had built himself. She had been a pupil in the school which her husband had taught at Walnut Hill, Illinois, and she was twelve years younger than he. Her first two children, Virginia and John, died of the whooping-cough; then came a girl, and then came William Jennings Bryan, who was born March 19, 1860, at Salem, Illinois.

"I do not know the hour of my birth," wrote Bryan, "because the hour never became material until after the death of my parents. As soon as I was nominated for the Presidency, astrologists made their appearance and offered to consult my horoscope with a view to ascertaining whether I would be elected. I never had any faith in their calculations but, complying with my general rule, gave the specialists along various lines such information as I could furnish. I remember that one astrologer wrote a letter which my wife answered in my absence. He asked for the hour of the birth of both Mrs. Bryan and myself. She responded giving the day of my birth and the day and hour of her birth. Her parents were then residing with us and she was able to secure the information desired. The astrologer cast my horoscope, based upon such facts as he had, and declared that it indicated my election. He was very much mortified at my defeat—seemingly more than I myself—and hastened to explain to Mrs. Bryan that his failure was due wholly to the fact that she did not give the exact hour of my birth. Having the hour of her birth, he had, since the election, cast her horoscope and felt sure that I would be yet elected for the Presidency. My wife enjoyed

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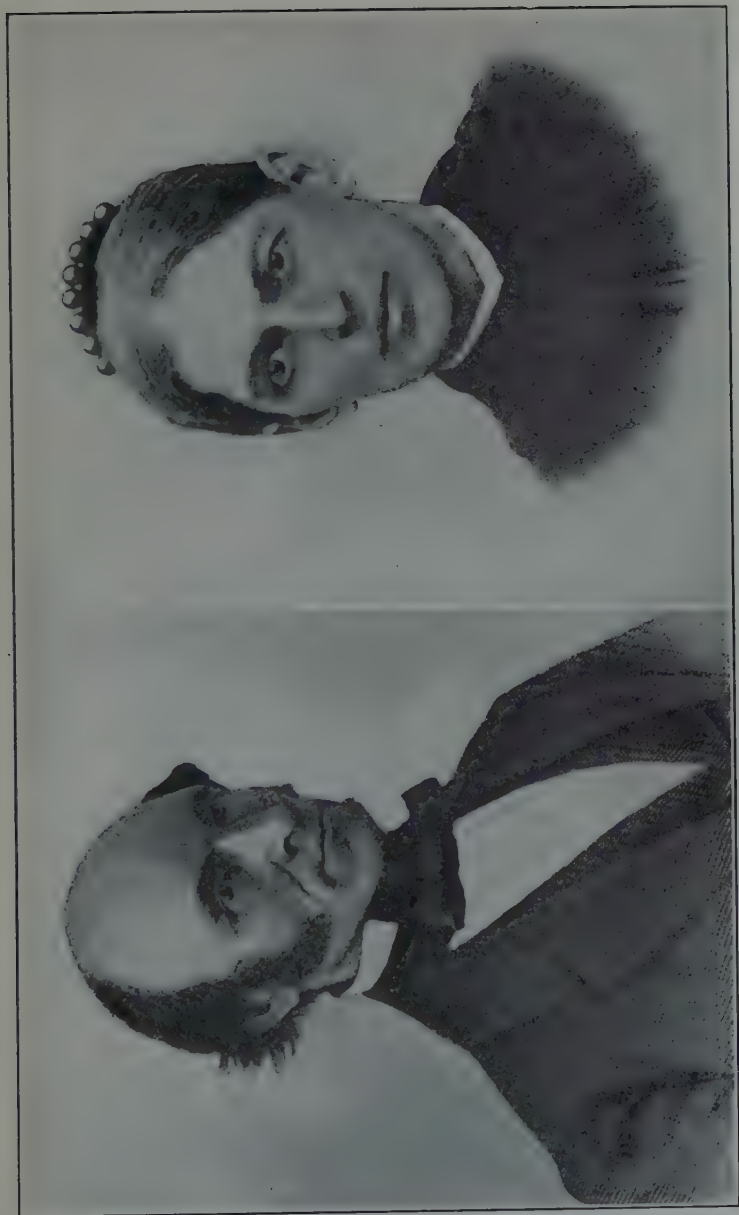
the humor of it and informed me that if I would stick to her she would land me in the White House yet. I responded, expressing my appreciation, but admitting it was a little mortifying for a Presidential candidate to keep his horoscope in his wife's name." According to a friend in Salem, Bryan's father, like so many fathers, predicted that one day his son would be President; in this case the prediction never came true, and Bryan always regarded the incident as apocryphal.

Whatever may have been the condition of the stars at the time of his birth, Bryan was naïvely emphatic about the generally favorable circumstances of his advent into the world, and he was humbly grateful for all the blessings which, with an engaging humility, he felt that God had seen fit to bestow upon him. In the Preface to his *Memoirs* he expresses the opinion that he was born "in the greatest of all ages," "a member of the greatest of all races—the Caucasian race," and "a citizen of the greatest of all lands." He said—and he meant it—"My cup runneth over." Throughout his long career Bryan never for a moment doubted that a Christian, American democrat was the greatest work of God. He once wrote this swollen sentence in defense of that view: "In that refinement which is a matter of manners rather than of heart; in that estheticism which prefers the form to the substance; in that learning which breeds vanity instead of breadth of vision—in these we may be inferior to those who have slumbered in the cold embrace of Eastern civilization, but in all that tends to enlarge life, infuse into it a throbbing earnestness and direct it in noble paths, I dare to believe America foremost, not only among the nations of today, but among the nations past as well." And early in his *Memoirs* he gave his readers

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this simple assurance: "In tracing my life from the beginning up to the time of the completion of this volume, I am simply showing what any one, equally fortunate and with equal opportunities, can accomplish in this favored land of ours in this golden age." As he, an old man, sat writing this in his sunny home in Florida, he may have heard ever so faintly the hands of applauding thousands as they sat, bovine, rapt, under a tent.

Religion ran in Bryan's family. When his father was a young man, his son reported, "he was fond of fun and took delight in the frivolities of his day." "One night as he went to a party he took cold and the cold developed into pneumonia. His condition finally became so critical that the attending physician thought it wise to inform him that, while his life was not despaired of, it would be the part of wisdom for him to make such provision for the future as he might think best. When the physician retired, father prayed as he had never prayed before and promised the Heavenly Father that if restored to health he would pray three times a day as long as he lived." God kept his part of the bargain, and so did Judge Silas Bryan. It was his habit on the bench to open court with prayer, and he was firmly convinced that the Lord directed his decisions. "You never could tell when Silas Bryan was going to break out in prayer," a friend once remarked. Sometimes, in the middle of a trial, he kneeled down and asked for special guidance. A Peoria lawyer met Judge Bryan one day just after the Supreme Court had reversed six of his cases. "I see, Judge, that the Supreme Court has reversed the Lord in six cases," the lawyer remarked. "The Supreme Court is wrong," said Judge Bryan. At noon each day, wherever he was, Bryan's



JUDGE SILAS L. BRYAN AND MARIAH ELIZABETH BRYAN

Father and mother of William Jennings Bryan

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father bowed his head and unostentatiously offered a short, silent prayer.

Bryan's father was a Baptist and his mother a Methodist, and they each retained the preference after marriage. "The only advantage I know of that can come from the parents belonging to different churches," Bryan wrote in his *Memoirs*, "is that the Sunday-school opportunities are doubled. I would not offer this as sufficient reason for encouraging a difference in church membership on the part of parents, but where there is a difference of this kind, the Sunday school may, to some extent, be an off-setting advantage—at least, in my case it gave to me the double interest in Sunday-school work, an interest which has never waned." When he himself was still quite young, Bryan joined the Presbyterians, and thus added another pleasure to his day of rest. In the Bryan household, Bryan informs us in his *Memoirs*, "the spare bedroom was set apart for the special entertainment of politicians and divines." Bryan wrote that his first ambition was to be a Baptist preacher, but when he learned from his father that it would be necessary for him to go down into the pool of water, he changed his mind. "I do not know," wrote Bryan, "that any conclusion can be drawn from this incident unless it be that at this early age my parents had impressed upon me the virtue of truthfulness and that therefore I was not willing to avow an ambition from which I had been turned by fear of water."

"My second ambition," Bryan recorded, "was to be a farmer and raise pumpkins. . . . I remember that a young lady by the name of Hester, daughter of Brother Williams, the much beloved pastor of the Christian Church, came into my life about that time and promised to wait for me. She

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was a very handsome girl, nearly grown, and encouraged me in my taste for agricultural pursuits. When I shortly afterwards decided to be a lawyer, she gave my change of plans as an excuse for refusing to look forward to a life partnership, and married a farmer cousin of mine."

Until he was ten years old Bryan was taught at home by his mother, and among other things he was encouraged in the art of standing on a chair and declaiming. His mother also impressed upon him "such a dislike for swearing that after I began attending school I would always withdraw when boys with whom I was conversing became profane." Bryan's father hated gambling, and he taught his son to believe that there was no distinction between playing cards in a parlor and betting in a gambling house, and that there was no difference between a small prize and large stakes. "He believed," Bryan once wrote, "that gambling rotted the moral fiber of the man, and before I was fifteen he stamped upon my mind a detestation of gambling which has influenced me to this day. It is my opinion that gambling is more demoralizing than drink. I believe that the confirmed gambler is harder to cure than the confirmed drunkard. That impression, which my father contributed to my character-building, has affected my attitude upon many public questions as well as my attitude toward men in private life." In the last year of his life, 1925, Bryan busied himself writing letters to Congressmen urging them to introduce a bill denying to the mails all newspapers which published bets on races, elections, and prize fights, and the winners in lotteries.

Both his parents joined in impressing upon their child's mind the importance of total abstinence from intoxicating liquor. "I do not know the day on which I first signed the

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pledge," Bryan once said, "but I guess it was the day when I first signed my name. I believe in signing the pledge; I am ready to sign one any time or anywhere if I can get a human being to sign it with me." It was only, however, after Bryan had heard a little girl recite "The lips that touch liquor shall never touch mine" that he joined his first temperance society.

When he was a boy, Bryan wanted very much to take piano lessons. His father, however, crushed that aspiration ruthlessly. "He checked my ambitions in this direction," Bryan recorded in his *Memoirs*, "with the brief but firm suggestion that the girls in the family could take lessons on the piano but that the boys would learn to make music with the hand saw. I have only inherited half of his views on this subject. When I hear a song that appeals to my heart I envy those who are able to sing. But experience has confirmed in me the views of my father about music in general. One has only so much time. If it is spent on instrumental music sufficient to become proficient it occupies time that must be taken from other things, as for instance, from reading, from which I think more practical value is derived. It is a very pleasant thing for a man to be able to furnish music to a company, but it is sometimes done at the expense of other lines of development. If one cannot reach the maximum in both entertainment and service, service is the more important of the two." This firm decision of Bryan's father may have influenced the taste which he expressed in later years. John Reed interviewed Bryan for *Collier's* magazine in 1916. "I asked him," wrote Reed, "about music:

"'You may say: "He likes music. But as with pictures and poetry, it is music that embodies a sentiment. The tune

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is only interesting to him because it presents words impressively.”’

“‘You do not care for symphonic music?’

“‘No. I refer you to Bancroft’s address on “The People in Our Government and Religion,” wherein the great historian declares “the people are the final judges of music as of other things.”’

“‘Could you give me some examples of music you like?’

“‘He thought for a moment. ‘My father had a song he used to close our Sunday afternoon services with when I was a boy, “Kind Words Can Never Die.” Then I am fond of “One Sweetly Solemn Thought,” and a piece called “I’ll Go Where You Want Me to Go.” And “Silver Threads Among the Gold.” All these songs have a sentiment. For a band piece I like “La Paloma.” In the theater I like David Warfield, Maude Adams, and Barrie’s plays. But I think that “Ben Hur” is the greatest piece on the stage.’”

In *The Commoner* Bryan printed the words of his favorite hymn, “I’ll Go Where You Want Me to Go,” of which the refrain went:

“I’ll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,
Over mountain or plain or sea;
I’ll say what you want me to say, dear Lord,
I’ll be what you want me to be.”

He also expressed in one of his books a great fondness for the song by the Rev. Robert Lowry, “Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight,” and he wrote that “Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight” “has probably touched more hearts than any sermon delivered since the song was written in 1877.”

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In his youth Bryan's father also read to him very often Bryant's "Ode to a Waterfowl." "I know of no more comforting words outside of Holy Writ," Bryan wrote, "than those in the last stanza:

" 'He who from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight;
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.' "

And that remained his favorite poem throughout his lifetime.

Lest the impression might be spread abroad that Bryan was the original of Little Rollo, he was careful to record in his *Memoirs* that "according to family tradition, I was not a perfect child by any means, unless the word 'perfect' is used to describe a boy with all the natural inclinations to mischief. Tradition has it that I used to disobey the injunctions of my mother and slip away from home to play with other children." One of his Sunday-school mates has recorded for history that Bryan was "studious, active and respectable—a model boy. But he was fond of watermelons, just the same." This informant added: "Bryan would not go to the patch to steal them, but he would enjoy eating them when the boys had secured the booty." The newspaper which published this memory was unkind enough to remark that Bryan had never entirely lost this unsportsmanlike quality. His interest in watermelons was a part of the tremendous appetite for food which Bryan developed early and which remained with him throughout his lifetime. His wife later wrote of him as a child: "He was sturdy, round-limbed and fond of play. There is a tradition that his appetite, which has since been a constant com-

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panion, developed very early. The pockets of his first trousers were always filled with bread, which he kept for an emergency."

After he was ten years old, Bryan was sent to school in Salem, Illinois, and then he went to Whipple Academy, a preparatory department of the Illinois College at Jacksonville. When he was a student at Whipple Academy, Bryan entered all the available talking contests. In his first year he declaimed Patrick Henry's "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death," but he got no prize. In his next year, however, he came in third with his oration entitled "The Palmetto and the Pine." Writing in his *Memoirs* of some of his first debates, Bryan said: "I do not remember the subjects debated, but I recall that in one debate in which the color question came up, I used a sentence which brought forth applause when in the course of a brief speech I described something under consideration as 'the darkest picture ever painted upon the canvas of time.'" This early success impressed his mind with the great importance of modeling his language after a not too rough ocean.

"When I left home for school," Bryan wrote in his *Memoirs*, "father told me that he was able to furnish me with the money that I actually needed but that he could not afford to have me waste money, and then he suggested what I have always believed to be a good rule, that I should keep an account and report to him the use I had already made of the money when I wrote for more. This I proceeded to do and I do not recall that he ever referred to the expenditures except in one case. I had spent ten cents for blacking, twenty cents for bay rum, and ten cents for candy. I entered the account as 'forty cents for blacking, bay rum, etc.,' the 'etc.' covering the candy. It so happened



YOUNG BRYAN

(By permission of the W. B. Conkey Company.)

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that the next entry was 'to the church, five cents.' He sent me the money that I asked for, merely adding by way of comment, 'I notice that you spent forty cents for blacking and five cents for the church. It seems to me that is traveling toward the Dead Sea pretty fast.' I can imagine that there was a smile upon his face when he wrote this reproof, but it answered the purpose. I never covered any expenditures afterward with 'etc.' and I never forgot the inference that he drew from the relative size of the amount spent for improvement of my appearance and the amount spent for the church." Once when he wrote home that his trousers were too short and that he needed money for a new pair, his father answered that as it was so near vacation time, he could wait until he reached home, and he added, "My son, you may as well learn now, that people will measure you by the length of your head, rather than by the length of your breeches."

From Whipple Academy Bryan went to Illinois College at Jacksonville. "I took the classical course," he wrote, "not as a matter of choice, because I had no choice in the matter. My father and mother decided that question and told me what I was to do, as they had decided for me the question of going to college. . . . When I left home, father took from his library two of the largest books, a Greek lexicon and a Latin lexicon, and told me that I was to use the former for six years in the study of Greek and the latter five years in the study of Latin. I did not then know of their importance, but have since been very glad that there were others wiser than myself to decide such questions for me. I have come to place a high estimate upon the study of the dead languages because of the training they give one in the choice of words and because of the

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acquaintance that they give the student with the derivation of words. I liked Latin better than the Greek—possibly because it is easier. I became so attached to the Latin that I planned to read some Latin every year as a recreation. But I soon became so occupied with work which was necessary that the sentimental was crowded out.”

As he looked back upon his own experience in the last years of his life, Bryan found that the period when a young man goes to college was a dangerous one, “accompanied by some religious uncertainty.” “It is just at this time when the parental authority is weakening,” wrote Bryan, “that usually the student begins in the study of the physical sciences. If he is fortunate enough to have teachers who are themselves Christians with a spiritual vision of life, the effect is to strengthen his faith and he advances to a normal religious life. If he is unfortunate enough to fall under the influence of mind worshipers, he may be led step by step away from faith into unbelief.” But Bryan was fortunate, for at Illinois College he found no “mind worshipers.” “It is a matter of profound gratitude to me,” he recorded, “that during these days I was associated with Christian instructors so that the doubts aroused by my studies were resolved by putting them beside a powerful and loving God.” This would seem to indicate that the study of the physical sciences did arouse troublesome doubts in the young man’s mind, and that he was annoyed with the disconcerting necessity for telling Satan to get behind him, evidence of an attraction that was great enough to require resistance. Realizing, when he was famous, the importance of furnishing young men with “solid grounds upon which to stand,” he tells us that he devoted much of his time to going from college to college in the hope of helping to

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combat the fearsome doubts of others. Perhaps, however, he exaggerated the extent of his own influence, for at some colleges the day after his presence there was no appreciable change in the attitude of the students, and at one or two it was even noted that some young men had been turned from interest in religion by the very words that Bryan had spoken.

In his freshman year at Illinois College Bryan recited on the subject of Bernardo del Carpio at Strawn's Opera House. He won second prize, which consisted in a choice of two books. He selected Shakespeare and an Oxford Bible, with concordance. In his junior year he won first prize for his oration entitled "Individual Powers," and part of it was a volume of Bryant's poems. He underscored his favorite passage in the "Ode to a Waterfowl" and gave the book as his first gift to the girl he later married. In college he also took the affirmative in two debates: "Resolved: That intemperance is more destructive than war," and "Resolved: That the President of the United States should be elected by popular vote." His college sent him to Galesburg to represent it in a speaking contest. Bryan spoke on "Justice" and won the second prize, fifty dollars, which he spent for an engagement ring for Mary Elizabeth Baird. Speaking and studying, however, were not his only college activities; it was recalled that he excelled also in the standing broad jump. At graduation he was chosen as the valedictorian of his class and also as class orator. The class poet, one S. J. McKinney, recited:

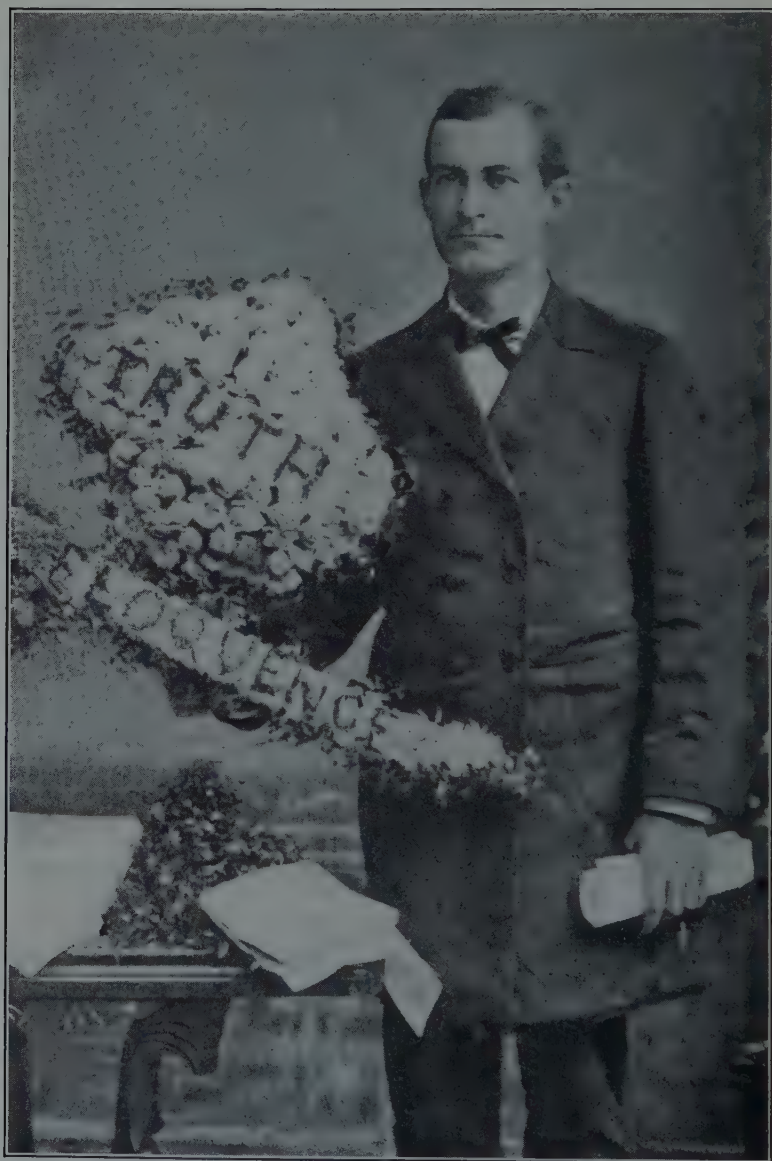
"Comes Bryan on the stand,
With many great orations in his hand.
Accustomed to dispute, with all compete,
He learned to act in victory or defeat."

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Bryan was not satisfied with the opportunities for oratory furnished by the speaking contests and debates, and he hired Professor S. S. Hamil, of Decatur, to give him special lessons in elocution. He spoke at literary societies as often as possible, and he made a few political speeches around Jacksonville to anybody who would listen to him. The *Jacksonville Journal* reported that "W. J. Bryan recited 'McLean's Child' with fine effect."

For his oration as valedictorian of the graduating class Bryan chose the subject "Character." In it he proclaimed that appearances were deceiving, that "brilliant wit," "pungent sarcasm," "pretended earnestness," were as nothing to a good character. Napoleon, young Bryan pointed out, "swept like a destroying angel over almost the entire eastern world," leaving "a path along whose length the widow's wail made music for his marching hosts," but, alas, he failed: "Talent, genius, power, these he had—character, he had none." Then the orator referred prettily to Demosthenes, Washington, and Lincoln. Youth was the time for the formation of character, he reminded the students, and the class instructors had not been remiss, he assured them. He ended with this complete sing-song, which even he never paralleled in a long career of oratorical endeavor: "However high our names may be inscribed upon the gilded scroll of fame, to thee we all the honor give, to thee all praises bring. And when, in after years, we're wearied by the bustle of a busy world, our hearts will often long to turn and seek repose beneath thy sheltering shade."

While he was in college Bryan worked in a hat store to help support himself. He also stumped the state for Congressman W. M. Springer, who was useful to Bryan later in the House of Representatives. His first interest in politics





BRYAN AND HIS COLLEGE DEBATING TEAM

The lady is Miss Jane Addams. The tall figure standing fourth from the left is Bryan

THE ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES

had come, like so many of his other interests, from his father. In 1872 the elder Bryan ran for Congress, and his son took an active interest in the campaign, although he was only twelve. The elder Bryan supported Horace Greeley for President that year, and he was endorsed by the radical Greenback Party, but he was defeated. When he was fifteen, according to family tradition, young Bryan made a successful political speech at Centralia. Bryan's father had been a member of the Constitutional Convention of Illinois, and he gave his son William an inscribed copy of the convention's proceedings.

The class historian at Illinois College had written of Bryan: "Law and politics are his friends and he intends to court them as soon as other things permit." The most important of these other things at the moment was love. After he became famous, a story was circulated that Miss Mary Elizabeth Baird heard William Bryan recite "A Soldier of the Legion" and fell in love with him on the spot. However, this is untrue, and Mrs. Bryan has given her own account of the attraction. Mrs. Bryan first met her husband when he was a junior in college in 1879. "I saw him first," she wrote, "in the parlors of the young ladies' school which I attended in Jacksonville. He entered the room with several other students, was taller than the rest, and attracted my attention at once. His face was pale and thin; a pair of keen, dark eyes looked out from beneath heavy brows; his nose was prominent—too large to look well, I thought; a broad, thin-lipped mouth and a square chin, completed the contour of his face. He was neat, though not fastidious in dress, and stood firmly and with dignity. I noted particularly his hair and his smile. The former, black in color, fine in quality, and parted distressingly straight;

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the latter, expansive and expressive. In later years this smile has been the subject of considerable comment, but the well-rounded cheeks of Mr. Bryan now check its onward march, and no one has seen the real breadth of the smile who did not see it in the early days. Upon one occasion, a heartless observer was heard to remark, 'That man can whisper in his own ear,' but this was a cruel exaggeration." "My classmates in boarding school sometimes warned me," Mrs. Bryan wrote, "that he was too good, but after considering the matter, I decided that I preferred marrying a man who was too good rather than one who was not quite good enough."

Bryan's Sunday school teacher, Mrs. A. V. Beville, remarked when she learned that he had been nominated for the Presidency, "I don't know any one fuller of proverbs than Mr. Bryan," and he himself has told us that he studied Solomon's words as carefully in his youth as anything he ever studied. This proved valuable to him when the time came for him to talk to John Baird about marrying his daughter. Mrs. Bryan has reported the interview: "In his dilemma William sought refuge in the Scriptures, and began: 'Mr. Baird, I have been reading Proverbs a good deal lately, and find that Solomon says, "Whoso findeth a wife, findeth a good thing and obtaineth favor of the Lord."' Father, being something of a Bible scholar himself, replied: 'Yes, I believe Solomon did say that, but Paul suggests that while he that marrieth doeth well, he that marrieth not doeth better.' This was disheartening, but the young man saw his way through. 'Solomon would be the best authority upon this point,' rejoined Mr. Bryan, 'because Paul was never married, while Solomon had a number of wives.'

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After this friendly tilt the matter was satisfactorily arranged."

Bryan studied law at the Union College of Law, and soon after he was admitted to the bar, he married Miss Baird. Many years later Colonel House congratulated Bryan on having such a fine wife. "Your marriage was a great romance," Colonel House said. "Still is," Bryan answered with a grin.

CHAPTER II

THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

BRYAN BEGAN to practice law at Jacksonville, Illinois, in 1883. His first client was a saloonkeeper named John Sheehan. "He said," Bryan wrote in his *Memoirs*, "he knew that I was not in sympathy with his business, but that he thought I might be willing to collect some small bills that men owed him for liquor they had bought. I told him that I did not drink myself nor advise drinking, but that I thought those who bought liquor ought to pay for it. I think the first bill he gave me was for \$2.60 and a note from me to the debtor brought a prompt settlement. John was very much pleased when I went to the door of the saloon, called him out, and counted out his \$2.60, less twenty per cent. commission; but what pleased John still more was that the man from whom I made the collection returned and again became a customer." Bryan practiced in Jacksonville for four years, and most of his business was on the scale of this claim. Among the Bryan Papers in the Library of Congress there is an old pocket memorandum book, and in his own handwriting there are the following entries:

Office Receipts for first 6 months of my practice	
July 4th 1883 to Jan'y 1, 1884	
July 1883	
Fee as guardian ad lit.	\$5.00
Collection for C. M. Evans	4.00
Collection for J. Sheehan	.60
Total for July	<hr/> \$9.60



MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

August 1883	
Aug. 1. Col. for Evans	\$1.50
„ 4. „ „ Sheehan	.25
„ 11. Making deed	1.00
„ 11. Evans col.	.70
	<hr/>
Total for August	\$3.45
September 1883	
Sept. 17. Making deed	1.00
„ 20. R. Larkin	1.25
	<hr/>
	2.25
Total for September	\$11.85
Total for Oct.	\$24.85
Total for Nov.	\$ 3.05
Total for Dec.	\$14.75
Total for first six months	\$67.55

Meanwhile Bryan had married, and he kept his living expenses down by doing his own office work and janitor service, and before he was married he used a couch in his office for his bedroom. He had desk room in the offices of Brown and Kirby, and Judge Kirby asked Bryan in the spring of 1887 to make a trip to Kansas to transact some business for Illinois College; the college was willing to pay traveling expenses and a small commission for collecting some debts. He also was to do some work for his father-in-law at Creston, Iowa, and he found that this would enable him to stop off and visit his classmate in law school, Adolphus Talbot, who then lived at Lincoln, Nebraska. The advantages of this growing western city impressed Bryan, and when he returned, he consulted his wife and her family, and they all decided to go to Lincoln. Lincoln was the capital of the State of Nebraska, and Bryan was impressed with

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the legal possibilities of such a location. Also, he had found in Lincoln the owner of a weekly newspaper who was willing to permit him to write a column each week answering legal questions sent in by readers. "This, I thought, would enable me to make acquaintances and become known to the people of the county," Bryan wrote. His friend, Adolphus Talbot, had also urged him to become his law partner, so that prospects seemed bright. He was not thinking much of the political advantages of this change, for Nebraska was a strong Republican State, and Bryan was already a firm Democrat, but when he was once settled in the new surroundings, he exercised his penchant for speaking on various occasions, social and political as well as religious. In Jacksonville he had made himself useful in this way because he felt that it was valuable for his law business, and because he always enjoyed speaking. Once when he was campaigning for the Democratic party in Illinois, he had this experience: "On arriving at the school-house one of the crowd was quite urgent in an invitation to partake of the contents of a bottle of hip-pocket size. When the offer had been declined repeatedly, the gentleman expressed the friendly hope that I would speak as well as I could anyhow, emphasizing the 'anyhow' in a way that indicated that he could not expect much under the circumstances. Before the meeting was called to order, one of the audience cautioned me against talking too long, and remarked that only a few nights before a speaker had nearly worn them out, while another encouraged me with the advice: 'Hit 'em hard, there isn't a Republican here.' The chairman of the meeting asked me to suggest a proper form of introduction, and, being anxious to secure what-

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ever professional advertisement the meeting might give, I replied that he might say: 'Mr. W. J. Bryan, an attorney at law, of Jacksonville, will now address you.' " When the chairman arose, he was embarrassed, and he said: "Mr. O'Brien will now spake."

Bryan threw himself into the political campaigns in Nebraska early in his residence there. He made fifty speeches against the Republican Governor of the State, and when he found himself invited to speak at a St. Patrick's Day meeting at which the Governor was to preside, he was a little nervous. "The program was a varied one—an instrumental selection, a declamation, a song, etc.," Bryan wrote. "The Governor rose and read from the list prepared for him, 'The next number is Mr. W. J. Bryan.' As I stepped forward the Governor advanced and extended his hand. It ran through my mind that he was a kind old fellow to forgive my opposition. Then the Governor drew me toward him and said in a hoarse whisper, 'Do you speak or sing?' "

While he was speaking in Nebraska, Bryan first realized his immense power over audiences, and it was like a revelation from God. Mrs. Bryan reports the incident: "He had spoken in a town in the western part of the state, came home on a night train, and arrived at daybreak. I was sleeping when he came in, and he awakened me. Sitting on the edge of the bed, he began: 'Mary, I have had a strange experience. Last night I found that I had power over the audience. I could move them as I chose. I have more than usual power as a speaker. I know it. God grant that I may use it wisely.' And as it was his custom all through

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life to carry to his Heavenly Father any new development, he prayed."

Bryan joined the Lincoln order of Elks, one of his first fraternal affiliations. In the course of his career he took to these affiliations with great avidity. He was a Mason, Odd Fellow, Elk, Moose, Royal Highlander, Modern Woodman, Rotarian, Knight of Pythias, and member of all the chambers of commerce and bar associations in the various localities where he happened to live. A note among his papers in the Library of Congress sets forth that he would have been a member of the Kiwanis Clubs as well, but the rules forbid a man to be both a Rotarian and a Kiwanis.

Meanwhile, the law business was not very flourishing. Bryan's old memorandum book has this résumé of his receipts as a member of the firm of Talbot and Bryan:

Oct. Nov. Dec. 1887	\$82.55
For year 1888	834.41
" " 1889	1998.29
" " 1890	1425.33
" first two months 1891	364.29
" 11 months 1891	1140.77

Bryan's eloquence was said to be especially useful to the firm in the trial of cases before juries, and he handled cases against the railroads with success, though his partners were attorneys for the Missouri Pacific Railway Company.

Meanwhile, he was writing and speaking constantly. In August, 1889, Bryan made an effort to get published a collection of papers to be called *Tariff Essays*, and in his papers in the Library of Congress there are answers to letters he wrote to Mr. Walter H. Page, who was then the editor of *The Weekly Post* in New York. Mr. Page

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pointed out to Mr. Bryan that the *Post* did not publish books and suggested that Mr. Bryan try G. P. Putnam & Sons. There are letters from Putnam's declining to publish the book on the ground that it would not sell sufficiently to pay the costs of printing.

Mrs. Bryan, in order to aid her husband, took up the study of law and was admitted to the bar. She read Blackstone with Mr. Bryan, and she also took an active part in the women's clubs of the community. Her first child, Ruth, was born in 1885. "I think," wrote Bryan in his *Memoirs*, "my wife never before looked so sweet as she did when she brought Ruth downstairs for the first time. The wrapper which she wore that day was long and flowing and she made me think of a Madonna. In fact, seeing a copy of Bodenhausen's painting of the Madonna a few weeks afterwards in an art gallery in Kansas City—the Madonna arrayed in a gown of almost the same tint as the gown my wife had worn—so impressed me by the resemblance that I took the picture home with me. It hung upon our walls until our son was married and desired to have it for his own home." This always remained one of Bryan's favorite paintings. "What do you think about art, Mr. Bryan?" John Reed asked him. "He hesitated, and then said slowly: 'I am interested in art, but I cannot say that it has had any direct connection with my political life.' He fidgeted.

"'But at least there are some pictures that have inspired you, some music, some poetry—'

"'Ahem!' he said frowning. 'Yes. The picture is of great importance. Four that I now recall have made an impression upon my thought. First, the "Madonna and Child."'

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“Which one? Raphael’s?”

“It doesn’t make any difference which one. Raphael’s is very good, but I prefer Bodenhause’s. The “Madonna” is great because it deals with the tenderest human relationship. Next, “The Breaking of Human Ties” presents the problem of a young man at the critical period of his life—”

“Whom is that by?”

“I don’t know. But you will find it hanging in every Y.M.C.A. Then Vereshchagin’s “Apotheosis of War,” which is a powerful peace sermon; and lastly “Christ Before Pilate,” which contrasts force and love.”

“But are there no great painters that you admire? None of the old masters, for example?”

“Put it like this,” he dictated. “Mr. Bryan’s interest in a picture is not because some famous painter painted it, but because of the idea it presents. And so with poetry. He defines poetry as the clothing of a beautiful idea in beautiful words.” ”

II

One year and a half after he settled in Lincoln, Nebraska, Bryan was nominated for Congress by the Democrats. This was hardly considered either an honor or a privilege, for the district from which he was nominated had been a strong Republican district for many years. In one of his Chautauqua lectures Bryan said: “I entered politics by accident and remained there by design. I was nominated for Congress in 1890 because it was not thought possible for a Democrat to be elected. I was young and new in the State. If it had been a Democratic district the honor would have gone to some one older, of longer residence and more deserving. A Republican paper said next morning after the

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convention that a confidence game had been played upon a young man from Illinois and that he had been offered as a sacrifice upon the party altar because he had not been in the State long enough to know the political complexion of the district."

But Bryan knew the political complexion of the district very well. He had made the acquaintance of the leading politicians of the State soon after he settled there, and he had visited more than thirty counties throughout the State during the previous campaign, speaking for the Congressional election of J. Sterling Morton, a Democrat, who was defeated. No one wanted the nomination Bryan received, for it was considered impossible of success, but Bryan proceeded to make a vigorous campaign. He liked talking next to eating, and he toured the district thoroughly, his pockets stuffed with his favorite vegetable, radishes, which he kept munching to satisfy the gnawing at his vitals. He roused his audiences to great enthusiasm by his ringing phrases on the inequalities of the tariff and the iniquities of organized wealth. "The mass of Republicans in this state," he had thundered at the members of the Democratic State Convention a few months before, "have deluded themselves with the belief that the Republican Party was only flirting with organized wealth, and that it would finally wed the poor man; but the marriage between the G.O.P. and monopoly has been consummated, and what God hath joined together let no man put asunder." It was a speech that he never quite forgot, for he repeated the same sentiment very often in the next thirty years. There was one subject, however, to which he did not then give his approval, although his personal habits were in accord with the principles involved, and that was prohibition. In this campaign prohibi-

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tion was an issue in Nebraska, and the Republicans were in favor of it. Bryan, no doubt, felt that the time was not yet ripe, for he never believed in throwing away an election for a principle that was not possible of success.

During his first Congressional campaign Bryan challenged his opponent, W. J. Connell, to a series of debates, and Mr. Connell was foolish enough to accept. He, perhaps, did not know that debating had been Mr. Bryan's favorite recreation since childhood. Mrs. Bryan in her biographical introduction to her husband's collected speeches wrote that the occasion of Bryan's final summing up in this debate "was a Chicago convention in miniature, and delighted Mr. Bryan's supporters." At the end of the last debate Mr. Bryan presented Mr. Connell with a copy of Gray's *Elegy*—perhaps as a consolation prize—and with it he made one of those cloying recitations which always delighted his audiences so much. "It," he assured his Republican opponent, "is one of the most beautiful and touching tributes to humble life that literature contains. Grand in its sentiments and sublime in its simplicity, we may both find in it a solace in victory or defeat. If success should crown your efforts in this campaign, and 'it should be your lot, 'The applause of listening senates to command,' and I am left—'youth to fortune and to fame unknown,' forget not us who in the common walks of life perform our part, but in the hour of your triumph recall the verse:

" 'Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure;
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.'

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But whether the palm of victory is given to you or to me,
let us remember those of whom the poet says:

“ ‘Far from the madding crowd’s ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.’

These are the ones most likely to be forgotten by the government. When the poor and weak cry out for relief they, too, often hear no answer but ‘The echo of their cry,’ while the rich, the strong, the powerful, are given an attentive ear. . . . The safety of our farmers and our laborers is not in special legislation, but in equal and just laws that bear alike on every man. The great masses of our people are interested, not in getting their hands into other people’s pockets, but in keeping the hands of other people out of their pockets.” The audience went home feeling that their young candidate was a very clever young man indeed, and Mr. Bryan’s opponent was left irritatingly defenseless against the onslaught of sentimentality. Already Bryan the politician had come to realize the platform values of the common man, and he was able to use them effectively because he felt them so sincerely, being a common man himself. And Bryan was never ignorant of the obvious fact that there are more mute inglorious Miltons in the world than there are Miltons.

Aside from the use of his clear, vibrant voice Bryan’s campaign cost him very little. In his old memorandum book there is this entry:

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Expenses in Congressional Campaign, 1890

Expenses before convention about 5.00

After convention

B & M 1000 [illegible word] 25.00

cigars 1.10

stamps 1.00

Subs. to West L. paper 1.50

Trip to Omaha .25

Mr. Bryan was elected by a small majority in a normally Republican district. Besides the advantage of his oratorical powers, he benefited by the fact that the public in that year was beginning to turn towards the Democratic party because of general dissatisfaction with the Republicans which resulted two years later in the election of Grover Cleveland as President for the second time.

During Bryan's youth the politics of the United States were recovering from long domination by the question of negro slavery, which had been killed as a political problem by the Civil War. While Bryan was growing up, there was a period of restless corruption, the usual political aftermath of war. Seeing their opportunities, men began to take them on a scale that knew no caution, and the result was a series of careless and profligate Republican administrations, such as that of General Grant, accompanied by local activities such as those of the ribald Tweed Ring in New York. Soon men began to think of ways and means of bettering others and protecting themselves, for the railroads and other forms of monopoly were behaving in business without restraint and in politics with careful exercise of artificial and corrupt control. The farmers and small merchants of the West, through whose lands and property the railroads ran and whose businesses were de-

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pendent upon them, were disturbed by increasingly obvious financial disadvantages. In the effort to remedy the evils about them men in the West began to experiment, and Bryan grew up in the very heart of these political experiment stations. His father, as we have seen, had been interested in the economic activities of the new Greenback party, which was one of the first to consider the currency problem as the basis of economic inequality.

Outside the big cities there was a vague feeling of discontent. Men felt that in some mysterious way they were being cheated, and feeling uncomfortable, they began to brood and to grumble. For many years there had been plenty of free land for the restless and dissatisfied, so that men who were not supporting themselves as well as they wanted to could move to richer surroundings, but the frontier had been rapidly developed in the scramble of economic exploitation which followed the Civil War, and the restlessness of the impotent ambitious was turning to mental gall. Envy of those who were better off than themselves followed, and it was not long then before men began to question the manner in which the prosperous had acquired their prosperity. Politically, the problem became a clear one, namely, whether the government should be controlled by private interests, or whether government should control the private interests. The control of the banks and the railroads, the relations of capital and labor, the distribution of public lands, the quality and quantity of the currency men used, were beginning to be discussed heatedly in the forty State legislatures and smaller civic bodies. And a man with a good voice and a modicum of economic and political information had valuable assets

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for a public career. Newspapers became more numerous, and books were cheaper. Men wanted some one to tell them what was wrong and how to set it right, and Bryan, among others, was ready to devote his energies day and night to that activity. There were no motion pictures, and the theater did not reach the small towns and country villages. The resplendent personalities of the time were the political orators and the religious preachers, and Bryan had inherited and developed extraordinary qualities in both these professions. In addition he was a lawyer, and a lawyer was considered something of a wise man in those days.

When Bryan arrived in Washington to take his seat in the House of Representatives, he did not find it difficult to win attention. La Follette, who met him for the first time in Washington at this period, described him as "a tall, slender, handsome fellow who looked like a young divine." He was thirty-one years old. Bryan also met his old friend from Illinois, William M. Springer, for whom Bryan had spoken in and around Jacksonville. Springer was making a strong fight for the position of Speaker of the House of Representatives. Bryan supported his friend, and when finally Springer compromised with Representative Crisp, Springer demanded that he be appointed chairman of the important Ways and Means Committee, and that W. J. Bryan, a new member, be appointed to that committee. This was an unusual privilege for a Congressman serving his first term.

During his two terms in Congress Bryan succeeded very well in gaining attention and applause. His first speech of importance was made on March 16, 1892, on the tariff. He told the gentlemen of the House what he had told the people of Nebraska, that he wanted to keep people from

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putting their hands in other people's pockets, and he quoted the Bible to them, which had already become his favorite oratorical practice. And he put his objections to a protective tariff in the homely terms which both Congressmen and their constituents could readily understand. "You want to raise an infant industry, for instance," he told them. "What do you do? You take a protective tariff for a lever, and put one end of it under the infant industry that is to be raised. You look around for some good, fat, hearty consumer and lay him down for a ground chunk; you bear down on the rail and up goes the infant industry, but down goes the ground chunk into the ground." And then he used effectively the rhetorical device of contrast: "On this question, I wish to say, Mr. Chairman, that the policy of the Democratic party is not hostility to industries. We welcome to this country every industry that can stand upon its feet; but we do not welcome the industries that come to ride upon our backs." "We do not desire to discourage industries," he added; "we desire to restore to them the 'lost art' of self-support. We are not objecting to 'infant industries'; but what we do say is that the public treasury shall no longer stand sponsor by the cradle of every 'infant industry' born upon American soil." This sentiment, skillfully phrased, received appropriate applause, and then Bryan sent forth this appeal which he knew would reach the ears of the grumbling masses and make them feel that a Daniel had come to judgment: "And the trouble with this country is that all over the land are the homes of forgotten men—men whose rights have been violated and whose interests have been disregarded in order that somebody else may be enriched. It is the principle that is involved in this little binding-twine bill. You see the

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industry that gets the \$20,000, but you never think of the farmers who go down into their pockets and pay the little sums that make up the great amount. Is not that a fact? Is not that the effect of the tariff?" "And yet this party, that boasts that it struck the shackles from 4,000,000 slaves, insists on driving the fetters deeper into the flesh of 65,000,000 of free men," said Bryan. Then he jumped to the defense of the laboring man: "The manufacturer comes here and pleads for a protective tariff in order that he may give employment with remunerative prices to labor. You give him the protection he asks; you make him a trustee for the benefit of his employee; you give that employee no law by which he can enforce his trust. The manufacturer goes back to his factory and puts in his pocket the bonus you have given him. . . . Yes, and when the employee asks for the higher wages that were promised him last year, you find Pinkerton detectives stationed to keep him off and foreigners brought in to supply his place." The ghastly events of the steel strike at Homestead in Pennsylvania were still vivid in the recollection of everybody who had read of armored ships with hired gunmen sent down the Homestead River for the purposes of protecting the property of the Carnegie steel companies and incidentally destroying the lives of some of their workmen.

"These men," continued Bryan, "tell us that they cannot live without the collections they make; and yet they are the ones who build their stately palaces, who give their banquets, which rival in magnificence the banquets of ancient times. These are the men who can gather around a banquet board as they did, I think it was in New York, to celebrate 'home industries' at ten dollars per plate, when within a

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stone's throw of their banquet hall were people to whom a ten-cent meal would be a luxury. Yes, sir, you take the statistics furnished by Mr. Shearman in the *Forum*, and he shows that 25,000 people own one-half of the wealth of this country, and 65,000,000 of people divide the other half between them." Then Bryan led up to his peroration with a bit of becoming sarcasm: "Why not say to the farmer, 'Yes, of course you lose; but does not the Bible say, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'—and if you suffer some inconvenience, just look back over your life and you will find that your happiest moments were enjoyed when you were giving something to somebody, and the most unpleasant moments were when you were receiving.' These manufacturers are self-sacrificing. They are willing to take the lesser part, and the more unpleasant business of receiving, and leave to you the greater joy of giving. . . . And they say, 'Yes, of course, of course; it makes dudes of our sons, and it does, perhaps, compel us to buy foreign titles for our daughters (*Laughter*), but of course if the great body of the people are benefited, as good, patriotic citizens we ought not to refuse to bear the burden.' . . . They are much like a certain maiden lady of uncertain age, who said, 'This being the third time that my beau has called, he might make some affectionate demonstration'; and, summing up all her courage, she added, 'I have made up my mind that if he does I will bear it with fortitude.' " And then, having retained the attention with a little joke, Bryan poured out all the eloquence he could command in a passage replete with poetic quotations and rolling phrases, calculated to make the common man pity himself and to bring tears to the eyes of the orator himself:

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"Well has the poet said," Bryan remarked:

" 'Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay,
Princes and lords may flourish or may fade—
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroy'd, can never be supplied.' "

We cannot afford to destroy the peasantry of this country. We cannot afford to degrade the common people of this land, for they are the people who in time of prosperity and peace produce the wealth of the country, and they are also the people who in time of war bare their breasts to a hostile fire in defense of the flag. Go to Arlington or to any of the national cemeteries, see there the plain white monuments which mark the place 'where rest the ashes of the nation's countless dead,' those of whom the poet has so beautifully written:

" 'On Fame's eternal camping-ground
Their silent tents are spread.' "

Who were they? Were they the beneficiaries of special legislation? Were they the people who are ever clamoring for privileges? No, my friends; those who come here and obtain from Government its aid and help find in time of war too great a chance to increase their wealth to give much attention to military duties. . . . No; the people who fight the battles are largely the poor, the common people of the country; those who have little to save but their honor, and little to lose but their lives. These are the ones, and I say to you, sir, that the country cannot afford to lose them." Then he added an ominous picture of a government

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without its people: "We cannot put our safety in a great navy; we cannot put our safety in expensive fortifications along a seacoast thousands of miles in extent, nor can we put our safety in a great standing army that would absorb in idleness the toil of the men it protects. A free government must find its safety in happy and contented citizens, who, protected in their rights and free from unnecessary burdens, will be willing to die that the blessings which they enjoy may be transmitted to their posterity."

Congress had not heard the like in generations, and they showed their appreciation in roars of approval; even Republicans found themselves spontaneously applauding. "There was hardly anything else talked about except the wonderfully brilliant speech of the young Nebraskan of the House," the *Washington Post* said next day. "This speech has been a revolution," reported the *New York World*; "no new member has received such an ovation in years." And the people eagerly grasped the words of this new champion. More than 100,000 copies of Bryan's tariff speech were sent throughout the country, and Bryan was famous as "the man who made a speech about the tariff." Even the local poets got busy, as the following clipping found in Bryan's papers indicates:

"Bryan with unaltered mien,
In a clear, sweet voice serene,
Took in hand the tangled skein
And begun to make it plain.

"As a sheep-dog sorts his cattle,
As a king arrays his battle,
So the facts on either side
He did marshal and divide.

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“And gave judgment clear and sound,
Praises filled the hall around,
Yea! the man that lost the cause,
Hardly could withhold applause.”

Some Congressmen around the lobbies of the hotel, after the spell was broken, remarked cynically that another cheap demagogue had arisen. But that was not quite true, for those who questioned Bryan's sincerity gave him more credit for astuteness than he ever showed that he deserved. Bryan believed every word he said, and perhaps he is only to be blamed because so much of what he said was commonplace truth. His manner of saying it, however, appealed to a vast number of people, and they recognized that his heart was with them in an important fight against the powers of privilege. In one of his most popular lectures he told his audiences: "I fear the plutocracy of wealth; I respect the aristocracy of learning; but I thank God for the democracy of the heart." There were so many democratic hearts in the United States, untouched by too much learning, that Bryan found a vast following for many years. He also told Congress: "They call that man a statesman whose ear is tuned to catch the slightest pulsations of a pocketbook, and denounce as a demagogue any one who dares to listen to the heartbeat of humanity."

While he sat in Congress during the early years of his career, Bryan took the opportunity of making himself known in the East by making speeches wherever he could, and the fame of his tariff speech brought him numerous invitations to speak. He had held Congress enthralled from two-thirty in the afternoon until five-thirty with that

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speech, and smaller civic and political organizations were anxious to hear the new star from the West.

Bryan's activities in Congress were not confined entirely to speech-making. It has been said that he obtained more pensions for members of his Congressional district than all his predecessors put together.

In the section of the country which Bryan came from there was one question which men were beginning to discuss and argue about more than the evils of the high protective tariff, and that was money, the kind and quantity needed for the best interests of the business men, laboring men, and farmers. After all, men had been talking tariff in politics and at the country store for generations, and if they were manufacturers, they believed it should be high, and if they were farmers and small merchants, they believed it should be low, and there was not anything much else to say about it. But the problem of the kind of money was a new one that had been forcing its way to the front because of the inflation of the currency during the Civil War, and because of the increased silver-mining activities in the West, and it offered plenty of opportunity for the expression of new ideas as well as an outlet for the grumbling of dissatisfied men. The platform adopted by the convention which nominated Bryan for Congress had this plank, which he wrote: "We demand the free coinage of silver on equal terms with gold and denounce the effort of the Republican party to serve the interests of Wall Street as against the rights of the people."

During his first term in Congress Bryan met Representative Joseph W. Bailey, of Texas. Bryan discussed his tariff speech with Mr. Bailey on one of the sofas in the rear of

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the House soon after he delivered it, and Mr. Bailey begged to differ with some of Mr. Bryan's ideas concerning the reasons for the evident fall in prices of commodities. Bailey said that "what we were in the habit of calling a fall in prices was really nothing more or less than an appreciation in value of gold." This interested Bryan immediately, for out his way in Nebraska men liked silver, since it was being produced not so far away in Nevada and Colorado. Bryan asked Mr. Bailey what were the best books to read on this subject, and when the House adjourned he asked if Mr. Bailey would go to a bookstore with him and help him to select some material on the money question. Bryan read pamphlets issued by the Bimetallic League, the report of the Royal Commission of England on the currency problem, and the works of the leading bimetallists of Europe, Cernuschi, Bonamy Price, Gibbs, De Laveleye, and others. He soon became convinced that the crying economic evil of the age was that gold was the standard of currency, and that if the United States could enjoy more money by making silver equal to gold in value, the scarcity in gold would not cause the dollar to be worth more than it should be worth, and men would be able to buy the things they needed for less money. The number of dollars issued during the Civil War had made paper money worth very little after the war; the decreased production of gold during these years had made that metal worth more than it had ever been worth before, and the increased production of silver had made that metal too cheap in relation to gold. When he returned to Nebraska from Washington, Bryan was convinced that the one thing needful was that silver be coined by the government into dollars at the fixed ratio of sixteen ounces of silver to one

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ounce of gold, no matter what the market price of either metal might be at the time. This was a rapid decision, for the question was a complicated one, on which scholars as well as statesmen throughout the world were differing widely. But the decision was made easier for Bryan by the fact that the West was where the silver side of the question was most popular.

In his own State, however, he had many who differed from him. He had announced that he was going to introduce into the State convention which met in Omaha on April 15, 1892, a resolution calling for the free coinage of silver. He was warned that it was dangerous to do so, and he told the convention, "If, as has been indicated, this may have an effect on my campaign, then no bridegroom went with gladder heart to greet his bride than I shall welcome defeat." The vote was 267 for Bryan's minority report on the platform and 237 against it. The convention was in an uproar, and a recount was demanded, and on the recount he lost.

Bryan was renominated for Congress in 1892. His Congressional district had been reapportioned, and it was said that the Republicans had been favored in that reapportionment. He held a debate with his opponent, Allen W. Field, and he increased his following by his eloquence. "At the close of the debate," wrote Richard L. Metcalf, Bryan's friend and campaign biographer, "Bryan owned the earth, and had he desired a fence to be built around it, it was but necessary for him to say the word." He was reelected by 152 votes, but as the district had usually given a large Republican majority, this was considered a triumph.

Bryan went back to Congress with silver on the brain. Early in the new session a bill was introduced which

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brought the money question to a head. It called for the unconditional repeal of the Sherman law, a law which required the government to buy a fixed amount of silver each month and to coin it. The silver question, like all important issues, had been developing slowly in politics. One of the issues of the Presidential election of 1868 in which General Grant was the Republican candidate and Seymour the Democratic was whether the war bonds issued to pay for the Civil War should be redeemed in the depreciated paper money of the time or in good gold. The Democratic platform favored paying the war debts in the paper money, for the Democrats argued that since the bonds had been bought with paper money, they should be redeemed with it. It was the same fight for stability against repudiation which had come up after the Revolutionary War and which usually occurs in every country after every war. Having recovered from the debauch of unbridled patriotism, people awoke to the realization that there would be a heavy hang-over of debts that either must be paid or must be swept aside. The Republican party, which has always had in its ranks large numbers of people who owned bonds, insisted that the nation's credit was at stake, and that the Civil War bonds must be redeemed in gold, or money which was backed by gold in the United States Treasury. This was the beginning of the difference on the subject of currency which continued until it broke forth in the passionate wave of excitement which, as we shall see, characterized the Presidential election of 1896.

During the Civil War the value of the United States paper dollar fell to less than fifty cents in the markets of the world. The farmer and small merchant of the West who borrowed money from the banker of the East in

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1865 gave him a mortgage or a note in which he promised to pay five, ten, or twenty years later. He received his loan in paper money, and if he borrowed \$10,000, he really received ten thousand paper dollars which were actually worth \$5,000 in gold. When the government decided through the medium of the Republican party that these fifty-cent paper dollars must be redeemed at their face value of one dollar, and that thereafter every dollar must be worth one dollar, the farmer or merchant who had to pay back his loan was compelled to do so in dollars that were worth twice as much as those he had received. This made the farmer and small merchant angry at the big banker of the East, and when he began to think of doing something about it, it occurred to him that the government had been in the hands of these Eastern interests who were represented by the Republican party. The farmer and merchant decided they were Democrats from then on and proceeded to vote accordingly. Some thousands of them went further and decided that both parties were no good, and they joined the new radical groups organized under the name of the Green-back party, the Grangers, and later the Populist party.

The currency problem cropped up again in the second administration of President Grant. The panic of 1873, the most disastrous in the history of the United States up to that time, had caused many people to believe that everything would be all right if only the government would issue lots of paper money, for it has always been hard to persuade people that twice as many pieces of paper worth half as much do not better their condition. Congress passed an act authorizing the issue of \$400,000,000 in paper money backed by the credit of the United States. Grant promptly vetoed the act, and the Republicans breathed easily for a

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time. The Republicans believed, and they did not hide their opinion, that the President had saved the nation from a dangerous crisis. The Democrats believed that he had helped those who lent money at the expense of those who had borrowed it. Both statements happened to be true. The currency act which finally passed Congress in 1873 omitted to mention silver dollars at all, and since the silver production had been increasing rapidly, the silver miners of the West who wanted the government to buy their metal and to use it, together with the farmers and small merchants who wanted to pay their debts in cheap dollars, called this act "the crime of '73" and held it against the Republicans for more than twenty years. The rich Western silver miner and the poor Western farmer and merchant found themselves political bedfellows, and, as Mark Sullivan has so aptly put it, "they organized several formidable political movements, in which the silver-mine owners, for the most part, furnished the funds, while the farmers furnished the fervor." The currency problem was the leading issue of the Presidential campaign of 1876, in which Hayes defeated Tilden, and many men believed in that close election that the Republicans had stolen it from the Democrats. During this exciting campaign Peter Cooper, a genial philanthropist of New York, was the Presidential candidate of the new Independent National party, and he received 80,000 votes of people who chose that way of indicating their disgust with the two leading parties.

Congress passed a law introduced by Richard P. Bland providing that the government must buy every month enough silver bullion to coin not less than two nor more than four million silver dollars. President Hayes, a Republican, vetoed the law, and Congress passed it over his

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veto. Meanwhile, the Secretary of the Treasury quietly accumulated as much gold as he could, so that when the public began to doubt the value of silver dollars, they found they could get gold dollars for them and for their paper money. They were then willing to let the gold remain in the treasury and use the handier paper and cheaper silver. Some people, however, feared the tempests of the times, and began to put their money in gold and hoard it in their houses. To complicate the situation further, the world's supply of gold became scarcer every year, and the silver mines were turning out more silver than the miners could sell at a profit. At this time several European countries, which had been using both gold and silver, decided that the overproduction of silver and the rarity of gold made it advisable to stick to gold, for every nation of the world has always sought a rare metal which could be coined for its standard of currency, so that it would be immediately recognized as valuable in exchange for things produced by other countries. The demand for gold became greater than ever, and men began to sell their securities to get it and hoard it. The reserve in the United States Treasury, on which the credit of the United States Government was based, began to diminish alarmingly, and meanwhile the government had to pay good gold for cheap silver because Congress, under pressure from the Western miners and farmers, had passed the Bland-Allison Act compelling the treasury to buy silver and coin it, and to pay for it in rare gold.

Just at this time Grover Cleveland was inaugurated President of the United States, and William Jennings Bryan went back to Congress. Mr. Cleveland was firmly convinced that the United States must get into its treasury

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as much gold as possible to meet its obligations, even if it had to borrow the gold abroad at high rates of interest, and Mr. Bryan was one of those who were convinced that the government only had to keep buying silver and sending it out plentifully in dollars to help the farmers and merchants. Business stopped moving while men waited to see which side would win. When Cleveland went to the White House, he discovered that the United States, due to the foolish act of Congress, had issued five times as many dollars as it had gold to pay for them. In his message to Congress, Grover Cleveland pointed out the dangers before the government if it continued to be faced with insufficient supplies of gold, and he begged for the unconditional repeal of the provision of the Sherman Act which had been substituted by Congress for the Bland-Allison Act and which compelled the government to buy more silver with gold and to issue paper money with cheap silver as its basis instead of valuable gold. The Republicans had been willing to join the Democrats in passing this act, for they feared the growing discontent in the West, and, besides, many Republicans believed in using silver in addition to gold. Meanwhile, the government of India had decided that it would no longer allow cheap silver to be coined without limit at a fixed ratio of value with gold, because the large production of silver and the small production of gold did not make silver worth as much in gold as it had been worth. This decision caused the silver of the silver miners to be worth even less than ever and was one cause for the business panic which soon followed in the United States. On August 7 President Cleveland called Congress in special session and asked it to make it possible for him to conserve the nation's gold supply, because the laws then exist-

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ing compelled the treasury to give anybody gold for silver at a price that silver was not worth then. Many people throughout the country differed with President Cleveland, though he had the support of all those who could realize that their economic situation would not be bettered because they possessed twice as many pieces of paper or white metal.

Mr. Bryan rose in his seat in the House to speak on Mr. Cleveland's recommendation nine days after the special session met. In a long speech which rivaled in eloquence and indignation the tariff speech which had first brought him attention, he denounced the ideas of the President and the head of his party. He began by telling the House the importance of the issue: "Historians tell us," he said, "that the victory of Charles Martel at Tours determined the history of all Europe for centuries. It was a contest 'between the Crescent and the Cross,' and when, on that fateful day, the Frankish prince drove back the followers of Abderrabman he rescued the West from 'the all-destroying grasp of Islam,' and saved Europe its Christian civilization. A greater than Tours is here! In my humble judgment the vote of this House on the subject under consideration may bring to the people of the West and South, to the people of the United States, and to all mankind, weal or woe beyond the power of language to describe or imagination to conceive." Reading this today we are inclined to mock, but his hearers, being nearer to a grave financial problem, felt that there was at least something in the young speaker's fulsome oratory. Having defined the importance of the problem, Bryan appealed once more for his friends, the common people, and he told the gentlemen of the House: "The man who wants the people to destroy the Government

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is an anarchist, but the man who wants the Government to destroy the people is a patriot." And then he gave the tail of the British lion a vigorous twist, an action always productive of popularity for an orator in the simpler communities of the nation. It had been contended that the United States Government could not alone decide the value of the metal it used for currency, but that it needed the coöperation of the rest of the world, and especially of its greatest creditor nation, Great Britain. This obvious fact was galling to the free and independent yeomen, who preferred to believe that they could do what they pleased, regardless of the effects of that action on their own or anybody else's affairs. "Let me appeal to your patriotism," Bryan demanded. "Shall we make our laws dependent upon England's action and thus allow her to legislate for us upon the most important of all questions? Shall we confess our inability to enact monetary laws? Are we an English colony or an independent people? If the use of gold alone is to make us slaves, let us use both metals and be free. If there be some living along the eastern coast—better acquainted with the beauties of the Alps than with the grandeur of the Rockies, more accustomed to the sunny skies of Italy than to the invigorating breezes of the Mississippi Valley—who are not willing to trust their fortunes and their destinies to American citizens, let them learn that the people living between the Alleghenies and the Golden Gate are not afraid to cast their all upon the Republic and rise or fall with it. One hundred and seventeen years ago the Liberty Bell gave notice to a waiting and expectant people that independence had been declared. There may be doubting, trembling ones among us now, but, sirs, I do not overestimate it when I say that out of twelve millions

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of voters, more than ten millions are waiting, anxiously waiting, for the signal which shall announce the financial independence of the United States. This Congress cannot more surely win the approval of a grateful people than by declaring that this nation, the grandest which the world has ever seen, has the right and the ability to legislate for its own people on every subject, regardless of the wishes, the entreaties, or the threats of foreign powers." Some of Mr. Bryan's audience must have wondered whether the Congressional calendar had not been put back to the Fourth of July, and some of them must have felt that the orator could not believe what he said; but his condition was worse than that; Mr. Bryan did believe what he said, for he was always the first one to become intoxicated with his own eloquence.

Bryan went on to tell the House that if it had a choice between benefiting the man who owed money or the man to whom it was owed, he, for one, was always in favor of giving the advantage to the borrower. Unfortunately for his cause, this was not the principle upon which big business was built. He argued then that the problem was simple: since there was not enough of either gold or silver to make one of them the standard of value for the world's money, all the United States had to do was to make both of them the standard for the world's money. What could be easier? He neglected to consider, however, that the United States could not do this alone, for it would soon lose its gold to those in perfidious Europe who saw the opportunity to exchange silver which they could buy for less than the ratio of value established by the United States and sell it to the government of the United States at a price which it was compelled to pay, a price higher than the metal was

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worth in the markets of the world. Throughout his career Mr. Bryan suffered from the delusion that things were as he wished them to be.

His eloquence, however, was not nearly exhausted; the House, which enjoyed oratory, gave unanimous consent to extend Bryan's time from the usual one hour, and he spoke for three hours. He went on to urge the President to take courage from an incident in the life of Napoleon: "At Marengo the Man of Destiny, sad and disheartened, thought the battle lost. He called to a drummer boy and ordered him to beat a retreat. The lad replied: 'Sire, I do not know how. Dessaix has never taught me retreat, but I can beat a charge. Oh, I can beat a charge that would make the dead fall into line!' . . . The charge was ordered, the battle won, and Marengo was added to the victories of Napoleon. Oh, let our gallant leader draw inspiration from the street gamin of Paris. In the face of an enemy proud and confident the President has wavered. Engaged in the battle royal between the 'money power and the common people' he has ordered a retreat. Let him not be dismayed. . . .

"The President has recommended unconditional repeal. It is not sufficient to say that he is honest—so were the mothers who, with misguided zeal, threw their children into the Ganges. The question is not 'Is he honest?' but 'Is he right?' " When Mr. Bryan attempted to argue that question, he entangled himself and his listeners in a mesh of illogical and irrelevant material. His intentions were honest, but, as history and logic have shown, he was wrong. He brought in Hannibal, Hamilcar, Jefferson, and Carthage, and even the Third Punic War, but these were all powerless to aid him in his attempt to prove that the United

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States Government could arbitrarily make Christmas globes or seashells valuable to the rest of the earth.

David F. Houston, who once heard Mr. Bryan speak on the silver question, wrote many years later, "I discovered that one could drive a prairie schooner through any part of his argument and never scrape against a fact or a sound statement." Most of Mr. Bryan's hearers, however, and all of his followers did not want a fact or a sound statement, but were inordinately impressed with the power of his eloquence and the strength of his heart. Towards the end of this speech he sang once more a song of his common people: "Work-worn and dust-begrimed, they make their sad appeal"; "their cries for help too often beat in vain against the outer wall." "This army, vast and daily growing, begs the party to be its champion in the present conflict. It cannot press its claims 'mid sounds of revelry. Its phalanxes do not form in grand parade, nor has it gaudy banners floating on the breeze. Its battle hymn is 'Home, Sweet Home,' its war cry 'equality before the law.' "

In spite of Bryan's efforts, which made him even more famous, the bill for the repeal of the Sherman Act passed the House and finally passed the Senate, but President Cleveland had been forced to the vigorous use of party patronage to gain what he thought best for the country, and he also broke the Democratic party into two factions by this necessary measure. But Mr. Bryan benefited by his speech; he made his own name and the cause of free silver more popular throughout the country. Bryan told the House that it might congratulate itself that "you have laid the free coinage of silver away in a sepulcher," but, he threatened, "Silver will lay aside its graveclothes and its shroud. It will yet rise and in its rising and its reign will

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bless mankind." It had already become a habit with Mr. Bryan to go to the life of Christ for metaphorical support on every question he happened to be discussing.

Whatever may have been the faults of his logic, there were elements of important truth behind the fervor of Bryan's fight. The battle for the free and unlimited coinage of silver was merely another phase of the broader issue between the agrarian population and the industrial population, which has since been decided somewhat in favor of industry. But it was also a battle whether the bankers were to control the government or the government was to control the bankers, and that question was only decided finally during the Wilson administration, of which Mr. Bryan was an important part, by the passage of the Federal Reserve Act. Meanwhile, the laborer, the farmer, and the small merchant were suffering most from the effects of these financial wars. The bankers and the manufacturers, who had sufficient surplus, were able to stop production until it should become more profitable, and the result was that the laborers and farmers were unable to sell their services or their crops at decent prices.

The years when Bryan was a Congressman and a public speaker for the Democratic party were the leanest years in the recent history of the United States. In 1893 the country suffered from a severe financial panic, due somewhat to the tinkering with the financial structure of the nation. The year 1894 surpassed any other in the history of the United States in the number of people out of employment, and in that year the pathetic gesture of Coxey's Army of the Commonweal of Christ and the ominous ugliness of the Pullman car strike turned the exuberance of the

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1893 World's Fair into a feeling of despair. Banks began to fail, and railroads went into bankruptcy.

The number of people who were willing to believe that their ills were caused by insufficient silver increased rapidly. *Coin's Financial School*, a primer on the question written in all too simple language, sold several hundred thousand copies, and Bryan's eloquence was in great demand and his name better known. No one, however, with the possible exception of himself, dreamed as yet that he could be a candidate for President of the United States. Even in his own State he did not have the majority of the party with him, and he was defeated in his effort to get the Nebraska State Convention of 1893 to declare for the free coinage of silver. He went back to Congress and continued to talk against President Cleveland and for silver, but he also sometimes mentioned other things. He spoke in favor of the income tax, a measure which was hated in the East and hailed as a socialistic endeavor to take money from the rich and give it to the poor. The law provided for a tax of only 2 per cent. on incomes over \$4,000, but this was considered by some an outrageous interference with their privileges. Bourke Cockran, a Tammany Hall orator, spoke against the income tax, and Bryan answered him. In the course of his speech he said: "Why, sir, the gentleman from New York [Mr. Cockran] said that the poor are opposed to this tax because they do not want to be deprived of participation in it, and that taxation instead of being a sign of servitude is a badge of freedom. If taxation is a badge of freedom, let me assure my friend that the poor people of this country are covered all over with the insignia of freemen. (*Applause.*)" Bryan read a statement

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by the social mentor of New York, Ward McAllister, that if the income tax passed, rich people would go abroad. "But whither," asked Bryan, "will these people fly? If their tastes are English, 'quite English you know,' and they stop in London, they will find a tax of more than 2 per cent. assessed upon incomes; if they look for a place of refuge in Prussia, they will find an income tax of 4 per cent.; if they search for seclusion in the mountains of Switzerland, they will find an income tax of 8 per cent.; and if they seek repose under the sunny skies of Italy, they will find an income tax of more than 12 per cent.; if they take up their abode in Austria, they will find a tax of 20 per cent. I repeat, Whither will they fly?

"Mr. Weadock: The gentleman will allow me to suggest that at Monte Carlo, such a man would not have to pay any tax at all. (*Laughter.*)"

Bryan welcomed the suggestion: "Then, Mr. Chairman, I presume to Monte Carlo he would go, and that there he would give up to the wheel of fortune all the wealth of which he would not give a part to support the Government which enabled him to accumulate it. (*Laughter and applause.*)

"Are there really any such people in this country? Of all the mean men I have ever known, I have never known one so mean that I would be willing to say of him that his patriotism was less than 2 per cent. deep. (*Laughter and applause.*) . . . If 'some of our best people' prefer to leave the country rather than pay a tax of 2 per cent., God pity the worst. (*Laughter.*) . . . I will not attempt to characterize such persons. If Mr. McAllister is a true prophet, if we are to lose some of our 'best people' by the imposition of an income tax, let them depart and as they leave without

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regret the land of their birth, let them go with the poet's curse ringing in their ears:

“Breathes there the man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said,

This is my own, my NATIVE LAND!

Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned

From wandering on a foreign strand?

If such there breathe, go mark him well;

For him no minstrel raptures swell;

High though his titles, proud his name,

Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;

Despite those titles, power and pelf,

The wretch concentered all in self,

Living, shall forfeit fair renown,

And, doubly dying, shall go down

To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,

Unwept, unhonored and unsung.’

(Loud and long-continued applause.)”

The income tax was passed, but the Supreme Court of the United States by a vote of five to four decided that it was unconstitutional, and it thus gave Bryan and his followers another grievance against the powers that were. The government's revenue was thus reduced and its difficulties increased. The gold reserve was falling constantly, and it was necessary to sell bonds and buy gold from a syndicate headed by J. P. Morgan, August Belmont, and the house of Rothschild. Bryan spoke vigorously against this action, denouncing with his usual invective the wicked financiers and the wicked President Cleveland, who could entrust the nation to perfidious bankers of Europe. The fact that the

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bankers sold the bonds they received in exchange for gold at a large advance caused more indignation in the West. But people continued to hoard gold and to draw it out of the treasury.

In the spring of 1894 Bryan announced that he was not a candidate for another nomination to the House of Representatives. He was urged by a group of Nebraska Democrats to be a candidate for United States Senator from Nebraska, and he accepted and was nominated, but the Legislature was won by the Republicans that year and Bryan, in spite of all his eloquent campaign speeches, was defeated. It was claimed by Bryan's friends that if there had been election of Senators by the people at that time, he would have won; Bryan had favored popular election of Senators, and he continued to do so until it finally became a law many years later. After he was defeated for Senator from Nebraska, Bryan wrote to the friends who had supported him: "Paraphrasing the language of Job, each public servant can say of departing honors: The people gave and the people have taken away, blessed be the name of the people."

Bryan accepted the offer of the Omaha *World-Herald* to become its editor, and he kept his views before the people of his State and other States by means of that paper in 1894. In his editorials, which were not nearly so interesting as his speeches, because, as one newspaper man put it, "Bryan could not smile on paper," he denounced Wall Street, the sugar trust, and the marriages of rich American women to titled foreigners. He also defended the Salvation Army against the charge that it was a noisy nuisance. And he kept hammering away his phrases in favor of the free coinage of silver, and mailed marked copies of the issues

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in which they appeared to influential Democratic politicians in every State in the Union. He also continued to lecture, and after Congress adjourned, he stopped off at seven cities on the way home to Nebraska to deliver lectures to crowded houses. During the interim between the adjournment of Congress and the meeting of the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1896, Bryan spoke in all the States of the South and the West on silver, and he became acquainted with and known to all the leading politicians who were working in that cause. Free silver was becoming so popular that many of the Republican State conventions declared in its favor, and most of the Democrats of the West and the South believed in it. Bryan was one of many leaders in this movement, but he was the most active and ambitious of them.

When he left for Chicago as a member of Nebraska's delegation to the Democratic National Convention in July, 1896, Bryan was the only man in the United States who believed that he might be nominated for President.

CHAPTER III

“CLAD IN THE ARMOR OF A RIGHTEOUS CAUSE”

THE LEGEND is that William Jennings Bryan sprang into international prominence by firing off one shell of full-blown oratory, and it is true that his speech at the Democratic National Convention in 1896 won Bryan the nomination for President, but this success was not altogether a surprise for him, because he had planned it in advance.

As we have seen, Bryan had succeeded in making himself very well known in certain sections of the country where his party was powerful, and when he arrived in Chicago in July, 1896, he was determined to speak out loud, and he knew just what he was going to say. During the previous months he had been trying out his speech in the sticks. Going to the Bible for his inspiration, as usual, Bryan carefully fashioned a metaphor about a cross of gold and a crown of thorns. He himself wrote in his *Memoirs*: “I had an engagement to speak at the Chautauqua in Crete, Nebraska, between the preliminary conference at Chicago and the convening of the convention. I was advertised for a debate there with John Irish of Iowa, one of the prominent advocates of the gold standard. I went to Nebraska to fill this engagement and then returned to Chicago with the Nebraska delegation. In the debate with Irish I used the sentence with which I closed my Chicago speech—the sen-

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tence which refers to ‘the cross of gold and the crown of thorns.’ I had used it a few times before that time, recognizing its fitness for the conclusion of a climax, and had laid it away for a proper occasion.” The proper occasion had arrived, and Bryan, carefully polishing his cross of gold and brushing off his crown of thorns, waited for the opportunity to use them. Meanwhile, he did everything possible to further the cause he believed in and to bring about his opportunity. The Bryan Papers in the Library of Congress contain a great many answers from influential politicians throughout the country to letters Bryan had sent them enclosing copies of his speeches, his editorials in the *Omaha World-Herald* and his draft of a free-silver plank for the Democratic National Convention. He also requested these men to send him lists of the delegates to that convention from their districts, and he kept up an enormous correspondence, by means of these lists, for the purpose of interesting delegates in free silver, and incidentally in himself. His correspondence was particularly active at this time with newspaper men. On April 26, 1896, three months before the convention, a newspaper man in Little Rock, Arkansas, wrote to Bryan and explained the tactical advantage of permitting Arkansas, which came so far up in the alphabet, to lead off by voting for Bryan. His friend urged him not to be reluctant to be the standard bearer, for it was his solemn duty. There is also this letter from Alabama:

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“The State Herald,

“Birmingham, Ala., May 26, '96.

“Jno. W. Tomlinson, President.

“Hon. W. J. Bryan,

“Lincoln, Neb.

“Dear Sir:

“I herewith send you today's State Herald, under separate cover, which contains an editorial endorsing the editorial about you in the Little Rock Tribune. I have sent the editorial to Mr. Clarke Howell, Editor of the Atlanta Constitution, and asked him to reproduce it in his paper.

“Your friends here are enthusiastically for you for the nomination. When you think it would do the most good, I will have our paper come out urging our delegation to vote for you. If I can serve you in any way whatever, write me freely. If you could make some speeches at this time in some of the closely contested States I think it would be a good idea for you to do so.

“I enclose you a copy of letter this day written Mr. Clarke Howell of the Atlanta Constitution.

“Very Truly Your Friend,

“JNO. W. TOMLINSON.”

Bryan had built up a chain of newspaper propaganda that was extremely valuable, and he also had wisely played for the political support of the new, but powerful, Populist party. One of the leading members of that party in a long letter preserved in the Bryan Papers suggests to General Weaver, the leader of the party, that he and other leaders go to the Democratic Convention at Chicago and promise the Democratic leaders that if they nominated William

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Jennings Bryan the Populists would consolidate with the Democrats. “Bryan,” wrote this man, “is a Populist in all but the name.” C. S. Thomas, later Senator from Colorado, received a letter from Bryan dated April 16 in which Bryan urged that the Colorado delegation support him if his name was presented. He wrote that his delegation from Nebraska “may present my name.” “Whether it goes further than a compliment will depend upon the feeling of other States. I am not saying this to the public but write you in confidence. The State would instruct for me, but I prefer to be a delegate so that I can help to secure the right kind of a platform. I think I can be more useful as a worker than I could as an ornament.” In this decision Bryan showed himself extremely astute. If he had gone to the Democratic National Convention as a declared candidate for the nomination, he would have been one of many, and his activities would have been limited, but as an ordinary delegate he was able to work more actively for his own candidacy and for free silver.

In 1896 Bryan played the same game which he played later in 1912. There were in 1896 two leading candidates for the Democratic nomination, Richard P. Bland, the leader for years of the silver movement, who had earned the sobriquet of Silver Dick, and Horace Boies, Governor of Iowa. Bryan, throughout the months previous to the meeting of the convention, maintained an attitude of complacent neutrality and assumed friendship toward both of these candidates. He was begged by the supporters of his friend Bland to come out in his editorials in the *Omaha World-Herald* for Bland, whose work for silver had earned him the nomination, but Bryan refused, giving his excuse that Boies was also a good man, although Boies had been a

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Republican before he was a Democrat, and at that time to be a Republican was almost as shameful in the eyes of Bryan as to be an evolutionist was later on. Champ Clark, against whom Bryan used these same tactics of assumed friendship and noncommittal support in 1912, wrote in his memoirs of a meeting with Bryan at this time. Clark was then a politician in Missouri, the State from which “Silver Dick” Bland came, and he met Bryan in a small town along the Mississippi River where Bryan delivered a speech. They traveled for twelve miles together in the same railroad coach. “During that ride,” wrote Champ Clark, “he said, ‘I wish I could disguise you and get you into the Chicago convention as a delegate from Nebraska for half an hour.’ I inquired his reason. He promptly replied, ‘To put me in nomination.’ In surprise I asked, ‘Are you a candidate?’ He said, ‘Yes, and I will get the nomination!’ ‘How will you do that?’ I asked. ‘By the rule of elimination,’ he answered. ‘Bland,’ he continued, ‘will not be nominated, because it is too early to nominate a candidate from one of the old slave States. I have no prejudice on that subject, but others have. Governor Matthews of Indiana will not get it because he is not well enough known. The same is true of Governor Horace Boies of Iowa. Senator Blackburn will not get it because his candidacy is only intended for home consumption. Vice-President Stevenson will not get it because he has sat on the fence too long, and I will get it,’ and so he did precisely as he said he would. In explanation of why he would like for me to nominate him he said his contending delegation was made up of able men, but none of them was in the habit of speaking to vast audiences, and might get rattled.” Through Bryan’s mind may have passed too the worry that his delegation from

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Nebraska might not be permitted to sit in the convention at all, for there was another delegation from that State who were advocates of the gold standard and who contested the legality of Bryan's seat and those of his followers in the convention. It would have been a great advantage then to have another spokesman from another delegation.

Before the Democratic National Convention took place in Chicago, the Republican National Convention was to meet at St. Louis, and Bryan attended that convention as a correspondent for the Omaha *World-Herald*, and he was thus able to see on the ground what his opponents were going to do before he planned his own course. It was certain that the Republican National Convention would nominate William McKinley for the Presidency; Mark Hanna had spent some years making that certain, but it was not certain what the attitude of the Republicans would be on the question of the free coinage of silver. Both McKinley and his manager, Mark Hanna, were in favor of fighting the election on the old issue of the tariff and merely treating the question of silver in a noncommittal plank in the platform. But there were wiser and bolder men in the Republican party who insisted that if the Republicans tried to ignore the issue which men all over the country were discussing passionately, they would lose the election. These men also insisted that gold must be made the standard of United States currency once for all, and that now was the time to make that perilous but important fight. Among these were Mr. H. H. Kohlsaat, editor of the Chicago *Times-Herald*, Thomas Platt, the Republican boss of New York, and Senator Joseph B. Foraker, of Ohio. Mr. McKinley had been going up and down the country for years talking tariff, and his name was on the leading

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tariff bill of the time, and so he felt that if he could continue to talk tariff he would manage to get into the White House. Mr. Hanna felt the same about it, but the bankers of the East and the leading politicians were insistent, and they succeeded in forcing the hands of both the candidate and his manager and inserting in the platform of the Republican party a plank that called for an inviolable gold standard. Melville E. Stone, general manager of the Associated Press, wrote the final draft of this plank, because he was the only man present who was able to spell the word inviolable.

There were some Republicans who advocated the free coinage of silver, and when the leaders of the party forced the gold plank into the platform, many of these rose from the convention floor and left the hall. Bryan was in the press section during this exciting scene, and another reporter, Arthur Wallace Dunn, described his reaction in his book *From Harrison to Harding*: “He occupied one of the seats far back in the press stand. When the silver men bolted he came down to the front, stepping on the desks, for everybody was standing on the desks at the time. Some one stepped on my paper as I was writing bulletins at the desk in the front row, and looking up I saw it was Bryan. With intense interest he was looking at the departing silver men, while different leather-lunged men in the hall shouted: ‘Go to Chicago!’ ‘Take the Democratic train!’ although none said ‘Good-by and God bless you.’ There was a gleam of joy in Bryan’s eye and the least smile of satisfaction flitted across his face. Did he then have a vision of what was to happen three weeks later?”

William McKinley was nominated, and the Republican party declared firmly in favor of gold as the standard of



A PAINFUL POSITION FOR NURSE MCKINLEY.

"I've got to take care of this Gold Baby for my political living, but I love my own tootsey-wootsey the best!"

(From *Puck*, Sept. 2, 1896.)

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currency. The Hon. John M. Thurston, from Bryan's State, seconding the nomination of McKinley, said: "My countrymen, let not your hearts be troubled; the darkest hour is just before the day. The twentieth century will dawn bright and clear, God lives, the Republican party is coming back to power, and William McKinley is to be President of the United States. (*Great applause.*)" "What an impressive illustration of the wonderful studies in discovery it was," recorded a writer of the times, "that William McKinley, during the tempestuous scenes we have attempted to describe, sat in his library and heard the cheering, the shouts, the speeches and the whirlwind which accompanied his nomination and kept as close track of the proceedings as if he were sitting on the platform and looking into the sea of upturned faces! Such was the amazing fact, for the telephone to which his ear was turned reported everything almost as faithfully as his own eyes and ears could have done, and he, more than half a thousand miles distant, knew the result as soon as did the excited delegates themselves."

There is another reporter who has left an account of a conversation with Bryan at the Republican Convention. Colonel Franklin Pierce Morgan, a Washington correspondent for many years, had known Bryan when he was a Congressman. He met him again at the Republican convention and reported the following incident: "At the St. Louis Republican convention I sat in the press section; Bryan, who was there as a writer for the Omaha *World-Herald*, sat next to me. We had known each other intimately when he was in Congress, and were on extremely friendly terms. One day during the St. Louis convention, he said to me: 'Frankie'—he always called me Frankie—'I see you are to be a delegate to the Chicago convention. I

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want you to vote for me there.’ ‘Vote for you for what, Billy?’ I asked him. ‘For the Presidential nomination,’ he answered. I thought he was jesting and took his remark as a joke. But I found out that he was in deadly earnest. . . . Every time we met he would bring up the fact that I was to be a delegate to the Democratic convention at Chicago and he kept insisting that he intended to be a candidate for the Presidential nomination and would appreciate it if I voted for him. . . . I did not make any promises. As a matter of fact, I thought the suggestion that he had any chance whatever to be chosen as the Presidential candidate of the Democratic party was about the most foolish thing I had ever heard. . . .

“When I went to Chicago to attend the Democratic convention I called on Richard Linthicum, then Sunday editor of the Chicago *Herald*.

“ ‘Tell me something about this man Bryan,’ said Linthicum to me.

“ ‘Why are you interested in him?’ I asked.

“ ‘I’m going to print a big picture of him on the front page of my Sunday edition,’ said Linthicum, ‘for I think he’s going to be the Presidential nominee of the Democratic party.’

“ ‘Dick,’ I said, ‘the two biggest fools in Chicago today are you and Bryan.’ . . .”

When Bryan arrived in Chicago, the story goes, he went to a cheap hotel. The clerk looked at him and demanded pay in advance.

II

The Democratic Convention at Chicago in 1896 opened in dissension. The delegates were divided, as had been the

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delegates to the Republican Convention, on the question whether gold and silver should be the standard of currency of the United States or gold alone. But, unlike the Republicans, the majority of the Democrats were for the use of both gold and silver, and the dissenters favored gold. Some of the States had sent delegates who believed in both, and there were contests over the right to hold seats, and the leading contest was over the right to seats of the delegation of silver men from Nebraska, including one W. J. Bryan. There was also an unusual fight over the selection of temporary chairman. Usually this is a cut-and-dried matter decided in advance by party leaders, but this was to be no cut-and-dried convention.

Those who favored gold wanted as temporary chairman Senator David B. Hill, of New York, who believed in the sanctity of business. Those in favor of silver wanted Senator Daniel, of Virginia, who favored the farmers and silver miners. When Senator Hill was chosen in advance by the committee, he was voted down on the floor of the convention by the enthusiastic silver delegates. Mr. Daniel then made a speech in which he pointed out that in this defeat for Mr. Hill there was nothing personal. It was, he said, a question of principle, and that principle was the unlimited coinage of silver at the ratio of sixteen ounces of silver to one of gold without waiting for the consent of any other nation on earth. This boon was, he insisted, universally desired: “It began with the sunrise in Maine, and spread into a sunburst in Louisiana and Texas. It stretched in unbroken lines across the continent, from Virginia and Georgia to California. It swept like a prairie fire over Iowa and Kansas, and it lighted up the horizon in Nebraska.” When he saw that grand array, and thought of the British

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gold standard that was recently unfurled over the ruins of Republican promises at St. Louis, Senator Daniel said he thought of the battle of New Orleans, of which it had been said:

“There stood John Bull in martial pomp,
But there was old Kentucky.”

While waiting for the committee on credentials to decide the contests over the seats of delegates, the convention listened to assorted speeches. Governor David Overmeyer of Kansas told the delegates that the seat of empire had been transferred from the Atlantic States to the Mississippi Valley, and they believed his words, which happened to be inaccurate. The day of the common people had dawned, he assured them, and “the dollar of our daddies” *would* be restored. Then Governor Altgeld, of Illinois, who was strongly suspected of favoring anarchy, because he had believed in justice for alleged anarchists, told the delegates: “Everything that the farmer and the laboring man has is mortgaged, down to the sewing-machine. All these mortgages are held by English money-lenders, and they are building up wealth by the toil of our people.” And the band played “Minstrel Boy” and “The Harp That Once In Tara’s Halls.”

Then the committee on credentials reported that the silver delegates, including Mr. Bryan, were entitled to their seats, and the convention approved the decision by its vote. Two tall Kentucky delegates were so happy over this result that they danced a breakdown then and there, while their friends patted time with their feet and the other delegates roared. Mr. Clark, of Montana, presented the convention with a gavel made of silver from the mines

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of Montana, and the convention adjourned until the next day, Thursday, July 9.

After it was decided that he was entitled to a seat in the convention, Bryan went to the committee on resolutions which was drafting the platform, and of which he was a member. He looked to see if the platform contained the plank he advocated on free coinage of silver, and he found that it did. Then he wrote a plank on arbitration of labor disputes and one on the Venezuela question.

Bryan had been aching to speak to the convention, but at first it did not look as if he would get the opportunity. He had been mentioned for temporary chairman, but as there was a contest for his seat, he was not appointed. Then there was talk of making him permanent chairman, for an orator is always needed for that job, but it was objected that he was a candidate, and that such a position would both hamper his freedom of action and give him an advantage over the other candidates. It looked as if "The Boy Orator of the Platte," as the East was already beginning to call him in derision, would be muzzled.

After the committee on resolutions appeared in the convention to report its platform, Senator Jones, of Missouri, sent a page to Bryan's desk. Bryan went to Senator Jones' seat, and Senator Jones asked if Mr. Bryan would be willing to take charge of the debate on the platform. There was nothing in the world at the moment that Mr. Bryan was more anxious to do. Bryan went over to speak to Senator David B. Hill, who was scheduled to attack the free silver plank of the platform, and he arranged with him about the allotment of time for discussion of the platform. They agreed to an hour and a quarter for each side. Senator Tillman, of North Carolina, was to be the

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principal debater for silver, and Bryan asked him how much time he wanted, and whether he wished to open or to close the debate. Senator Tillman wanted more time than all the others decided should be used for closing speeches, so that it was finally agreed that he should open the debate for the free-silver advocates, and that Bryan would close their side of the debate. This was a great advantage for Bryan, as he himself pointed out in his *Memoirs*: “I had spoken long enough,” he wrote, “to know that, comparing myself with myself, I was more effective in a brief speech in conclusion than a longer speech that simply laid down propositions for another to answer.” Mr. Bryan seemed to realize that he sang better than he argued.

Then Mr. Bryan had another stroke of luck. The debate was put over until the following day. That night he sat in his hotel room and arranged his arguments. “I fitted my definition of the business man at the place that I thought best and kept my ‘cross of gold and crown of thorns’ for the conclusion,” he tells us.

“When the Convention convened,” wrote Bryan, “I felt as I always do just before a speech of unusual importance. I usually have a feeling of weakness at the pit of my stomach—a suggestion of faintness. I want to lie down. But this being impossible in the Convention, I got a sandwich and a cup of coffee and devoted myself to these as I waited for the debate to begin. During these moments of suspense Clarke Howell, with whom I became acquainted in 1893 and whose father was one of the leaders in the silver movement, sent me a note scribbled on an envelope. I read, ‘This is a great opportunity.’ I wrote under the words, ‘You will not be disappointed,’ and sent the envelope back to him.” The day before the New York *World* had written: “The

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silverites have neither machine nor boss; the opportunity is here; the man is lacking.”

Senator Ben Tillman, alias “Pitchfork” Tillman, began the debate. He presented the question as a sectional battle between the South and the West on the one side and the Northeastern States on the other. This annoyed many delegates, for they wished union, not division, and they hissed Tillman unmercifully. Fifteen thousand people had gathered in the convention hall at Chicago that day. Finally, Tillman lost his temper, and he shouted at his hostile audience: “There are only three things in the world that can hiss—a goose, a serpent, and a man.”

Senator Hill, the representative of the New York business interests, argued vigorously for gold. “He was at his best,” wrote Bryan, “and presented the arguments on his side with consummate skill and adroitness. The effect upon the audience was apparent and the nervousness of our delegation increased as he proceeded.” But there was also restlessness in the delegations, for Senator Hill was not an orator, and the arguments for gold and silver were too complicated to hold the attention of a vast audience. Then Senator Vilas spoke for gold, and while he was speaking Governor Russell, of Massachusetts, rushed up to Senator Hill and protested that he was occupying too much time and would leave none for Governor Russell. Mr. Bryan, hearing the discussion, suggested that the time be extended, and that time be added to his own allotment equivalent with that permitted to the gold advocates. Governor Russell was very happy at the suggestion, and Senator Hill agreed. “I cannot say,” wrote Bryan in his *Memoirs*, “that it was entirely unselfish on my side, and I think I would have made the suggestion if the extension of time had

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fallen to some one else, but as it was, it added about ten minutes to my time, and I needed it for the speech I was to make. This was another unexpected bit of good fortune. I had never had such an opportunity before in my life and never expect to have again.”

The setting as Bryan rose to speak was just the setting to put before an orator. Most of the inhabitants of the United States understood nothing of the complicated economic problems involved in the coinage of silver and gold, but many of them were sympathetic to what Henry George, reporting this convention for the *New York Journal*, described as “largely blind and extremely vague expression of bitter discontent.” People did feel in their nerves a battle between the banker and industrialist on the one side and the farmer and shopkeeper on the other. The Democrats, always the party of the farmer and small business man, were being whipped into shape by the leaders of the industrial centers and urged to advocate a gold standard. Somehow or other, no matter how logical their arguments, the majority of the delegates did not trust Senator Hill, of New York, Governor Russell, of Massachusetts, and General Vilas, when they told them of the necessity for a gold standard. The silent listeners were not clever enough to answer the careful and stern arguments of the gold advocates, and they were annoyed at their own impotence and ready to applaud appropriate sentiment which expressed their discontent.

Mr. Bryan, tall, stocky, pale, with long black hair and beaked nose, sprang eagerly from his seat and hurried to the platform. The voices of the other speakers had not carried in the huge auditorium, but every one of the fifteen thousand in the audience heard Bryan’s first words, beautifully modulated. “I would be presumptuous, indeed,” he

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began, “to present myself against the distinguished gentlemen to whom you have listened, if this were a measuring of abilities; but this is not a contest between persons. The humblest citizen in all the land, when clad in the armor of a righteous cause, is stronger than all the hosts of error. I come to speak to you in defense of a cause as holy as the cause of liberty—the cause of humanity.”

He then traced very briefly the organization of the free silver forces, and he said triumphantly: “With a zeal approaching the zeal which inspired the crusaders who followed Peter the Hermit, our silver Democrats went forth from victory unto victory until they are now assembled, not to discuss, not to debate, but to enter up the judgment already rendered by the plain people of this country. In this contest brother has been arrayed against brother, father against son. The warmest ties of love, acquaintance, and association have been disregarded; old leaders have been cast aside when they have refused to give expression to the sentiments of those whom they would lead, and new leaders have sprung up to give direction to this cause of truth. Thus has the contest been waged, and we have assembled here under as binding and solemn instructions as were ever imposed upon representatives of the people.” There was applause and attention. Ex-Governor Hogg, of Texas, a heavy man, six feet two, was “beaming with delight” in one corner of the auditorium at Bryan’s left, and the speaker saw that encouraging face every time he turned in that direction. His friend Ollie James, of Kentucky, another tall man, stood in the same relative position on the right, and the orator was encouraged by the evident sympathy on those two faces.

Leading up from his introduction with a few careful

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words concerning the gentlemen who had preceded him, Bryan sailed into an offensive with these rolling words:

“When you [turning to the gold delegates] come before us and tell us that we are about to disturb your business interests, we reply that you have disturbed our business interests by your course.

“We say to you that you have made the definition of a business man too limited in its application. The man who is employed for wages is as much a business man as his employer, the attorney in a country town is as much a business man as the corporation counsel in a great metropolis; the merchant at the crossroads store is as much a business man as the merchant of New York; the farmer who goes forth in the morning and toils all day—who begins in the spring and toils all summer—and who by the application of brain and muscle to the natural resources of the country creates wealth, is as much a business man as the man who goes upon the board of trade and bets upon the price of grain; the miners who go down a thousand feet into the earth, or climb two thousand feet upon the cliffs, and bring forth from their hiding-places the precious metals to be poured into the channels of trade, are as much business men as the few financial magnates who, in a back room, corner the money of the world. We come to speak for this broader class of business men.”

The audience rose to Bryan's eloquence in a manner which he described as “like a trained choir.”

“Ah, my friends,” he continued, “we say not one word against those who live upon the Atlantic coast, but the hardy pioneers who have braved all the dangers of the wilderness, who have made the desert to blossom as the rose—the pioneers away out there [pointing to the West], who

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rear their children near to Nature's heart, where they can mingle their voices with the voices of the birds—out there where they have erected schoolhouses for the education of their young, churches where they praise their Creator, and cemeteries where rest the ashes of their dead—these people, we say, are as deserving of the consideration of our party as any people in this country. It is for these that we speak. We do not come as aggressors. Our war is not a war of conquest; we are fighting in the defense of our homes, our families, and prosperity. We have petitioned, and our petitions have been scorned; we have entreated, and our entreaties have been disregarded; we have begged, and they have mocked when our calamity came. We beg no longer; we entreat no more; we petition no more. We defy them." There was a thunder of applause.

Then Bryan answered with generalities the general objections to silver offered by those who had spoken before him. "If they ask us," he concluded in this phase of his speech, "why it is that we say more on the money question than we say upon the tariff question, I reply that, if protection has slain its thousands, the gold standard has slain its tens of thousands." Then he spoke of Mr. McKinley: "Mr. McKinley was the most popular man among the Republicans, and three months ago everybody in the Republican party prophesied his election. How is it today? Why, the man who was once pleased to think that he looked like Napoleon—that man shudders today when he remembers that he was nominated on the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo. Not only that, but as he listens he can hear with ever-increasing distinctness the sound of the waves as they beat upon the lonely shores of St. Helena." An "indignant people," Bryan thought, would visit their "aveng-

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ing wrath” on a man who would “place the legislative control of our affairs in the hands of foreign potentates and powers.” He then expressed his confidence that the Democrats would win, and described the two opposing theories of government: “There are those who believe that, if you will only legislate to make the well-to-do prosperous, their prosperity will leak through on those below. The Democratic idea, however, has been that if you legislate to make the masses prosperous, their prosperity will find its way up through every class which rests upon them.” And then in mellow, resounding tones he uttered his famous peroration:

“You come to us and tell us that the great cities are in favor of the gold standard; we reply that the great cities rest upon our broad and fertile prairies. Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country.

“My friends, we declare that this nation is able to legislate for its own people on every question, without waiting for the aid or consent of any other nation on earth; and upon that issue we expect to carry every State in the Union. . . . It is the issue of 1776 over again. Our ancestors, when but three millions in number, had the courage to declare their political independence of every other nation; shall we, their descendants, when we have grown to seventy millions, declare that we are less independent than our forefathers? Therefore, we care not upon what lines the battle is fought. If they say bimetallism is good, but that we cannot have it until other nations help us, we reply that, instead of having a gold standard because England has, we will restore bimetallism, and then let England have bimetallism because

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the United States has it. If they dare to come out in the open field and defend the gold standard as a good thing, we will fight them to the uttermost. Having behind us the producing masses of this nation and the world, supported by the commercial interests, the laboring interests, and the toilers everywhere, we will answer their demand for a gold standard by saying to them: You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns, you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold."

All through his speech there had been spontaneous outbursts of applause, but when Bryan had finished, the convention went collectively insane. Men yelled, wept, shrieked, and marched, grabbing the standards of the various States and making for the seat of Mr. Bryan. A delegate from Georgia, Bush, with long whiskers and strong lungs, trampled his way from the back of the hall with the standard of Georgia, and a wild yell from the rear indicated that there was to be a mad race between him and Joe Lacy, a Cherokee delegate from the Indian Territory. The Indian plunged through the New York delegation, which was trying to maintain a hostile composure, and upset both its dignity and its comfort. The delegates from Alabama led "a grand march of glory" around the hall. Men grabbed for Bryan, eager to touch his coat, and finally eight heavy men managed to lift him on their shoulders, which one observer described as "a Greco-Roman wrestling match with an upright piano in a moving van." Bryan tried to look pleasant on the shoulders of his admirers, but he was white with the exhaustion of his effort and found it necessary to grasp the shoulders of his supporters to prevent himself from tumbling under their feet. Finally he begged to be lowered into his seat, and his admirers consented, but others

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promptly sat in his lap, “hugged him until his collar wilted, shook his hand, shouted into his ears, danced all over his feet, and hemmed him in until he could scarcely get his breath.” The only person who seemed to maintain his cynical composure entirely was the staunch Republican correspondent of the New York *Tribune*, who telegraphed his paper: “In closing his speech, Mr. Bryan dramatically said: ‘You shall not crucify mankind on a cross of gold.’ This blatherskite declaration stirred up the depths of the Populistic Convention. For half an hour nothing was done but cheer Bryan.” During the hysterical uproar, a sound-money delegate, placing his lips close to William F. Sheehan’s ear, reminded him of Macduff’s statement: “Confusion now hath made his masterpiece.” The *Tribune* correspondent, elaborating his opinion, told his readers that Mr. Bryan was not “a speaker of more than average accomplishments.” Governor Stone, one of Mr. Bryan’s admirers, remarked that the orator was “as beautiful as Apollo,” and that his speech was “intellectual beyond comparison.” Those who listened to Bryan’s speech received an emotional experience that remained with them for years; it was like hearing Jenny Lind or Patti sing, and innumerable grandchildren were assured that never had there been the like of it in the memory of man. The effect on the entire nation was tremendous: “Through the nerves of the telegraph,” wrote William Allen White, “that speech thrilled a continent, and for a day a nation was in a state of mental and moral catalepsy. If the election had been held that July day, Bryan would have been chosen President. Indeed, all his opponents did in the three months following his speech was to arouse the people from their trance. It took much shaking up to break the spell, much marching of the patient

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up and down the land under torches and to martial music to revive him and restore him to his natural faculties."

The leaders of the convention felt that there had been enough excitement for that one day, and after the adoption of the platform with its plank declaring, "We demand the free and unlimited coinage of both silver and gold at the present legal ratio of sixteen to one, without waiting for the aid or consent of any other nation," the convention adjourned for the afternoon.

It was generally agreed that if balloting had begun for the nominations for President at that session, Bryan would have been chosen by acclamation, and when the convention met again that evening, the enthusiasm for Bryan had not diminished. Nominating speeches were made, and Bryan's name was placed before the convention by Hal T. Lewis of Georgia, who described Bryan as "a soul come to lead the Israelites to battle." Among the others nominated was Richard P. Bland, and in presenting his name Senator Vest urged the delegates:

"Give us Silver Dick, and silver quick,
And we will make McKinley sick,
In the Ides of next November."

Horace Boies, of Iowa, Governor Claude Matthews, of Indiana, Joseph S. Blackburn, Robert E. Pattison, John R. McLean, and Governor Pennoyer were also presented to the convention, and then they adjourned till the next day.

Bryan did not go to the convention the next day but remained at his hotel. He was busy all the forenoon discussing the situation. On the first and second ballots Bland led and Bryan was second. On the third ballot Bryan gained, and it was realized that nothing could prevent his

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nomination. A banner reading, “Bryan! Bryan! no crown of thorns, no cross of gold,” was carried about the hall. Many of Bryan’s friends paraded the convention hall with a picture of Bryan published that morning in the *Chicago Times-Herald* pinned to their breasts and fastened to brooms, and they yelled, “Bryan, Bryan, William Jennings Bryan,” as they marched round the hall, headed by a band. On the fourth ballot Bryan received more votes than Bland for the first time, and on the fifth he was nominated, as other candidates withdrew their names, and the band played. Meanwhile, Bryan was in a barber shop getting shaved.

The convention adjourned from Thursday until Saturday, before voting for a candidate for Vice-President. The New York *Tribune* correspondent denied that this had been done because Friday was an unlucky day. “A party,” wrote the reporter, “that had the courage to nominate Bryan for the Presidency, couldn’t be frightened by a Friday.” It was agreed that a man of wealth, from the East, if possible, must be the candidate for Vice-President, and finally Arthur Sewall, a wealthy shipbuilder of Maine, consented to accept the nomination.

Bryan tells us that he took with him to the convention one hundred dollars, and that after paying the hotel bill for himself and Mrs. Bryan, he had left forty dollars. He had wanted Mrs. Bryan to accompany him, she wrote, because he had a feeling that he might be nominated.

III

After Bryan was nominated for President, he no longer enjoyed any privacy and was able to get very little peace. There was a great wave of curiosity throughout the country

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embracing everything about the new candidate, who was comparatively unknown in some sections of the United States. “His shoulders are broad enough to excite the approval of a Norse Viking; his chest is as deep as that of a race horse,” wrote one campaign biographer. “Mounted on his square shoulders is a square head,” said this writer. “No beard, no moustache, has the freedom of his visage. Every trace is carefully mowed away with the light of each new day, and when the world meets the young statesman he’s as smug and smooth as a pulpiteer. There is nothing soft, yielding, or effeminate about him; nothing of the willow. His eye is dark, his complexion swarthy, with the British, not the Spanish swarthinness; his nose an emphatic curve, his mouth well widened and firm, and the whole face founded on a jaw, the very seat of power, and as square-hewn and indomitable as if cut from the living rock. . . . He is well, even highly, educated. He has dug through books and tunneled learning equal with any dusty, musty college professor of them all. More than books, he has studied men, and their lives have been his lessons. He has a memory like wax, and all he has heard, or read, or seen, abides with him. He is not so profound as quick; and with an intellect rather military than philosophical, he makes weapons of all he knows, and every scrap of learning belonging to him is at prompt and ready hand to be either defensive or offensive, as his swift genius for combat may decide.”

Immediately after Bryan’s stirring speech, a newspaper reporter appeared in his hotel room and asked if he might sit there. Then another arrived, and presently the room was full of them. They noted everything Bryan did and said. “The angle of inclination was noted as I lay upon the

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bed,” Bryan wrote later. “I was given credit for using a paper to protect the bedclothes from my feet; the rabbit’s foot given me as I left the convention hall was reproduced in the papers; the bulletins announced that Mrs. Bryan preserved her composure during the nominating scene, and when I remarked that I was glad she had done so, the world was at once permitted to share my joy.” When the candidate and Mrs. Bryan tried to escape for a quiet Sunday, they found five carriages filled with newspaper writers following them. “But they were a gentlemanly and genial crowd, and I soon learned to save myself much trouble by telling them the exact moment of rising and retiring, and in reporting in advance the things to be done and, in review, the things which had been done.”

The rabbit’s foot which was thrust into Bryan’s hand as he left the convention hall after his speech was one of thousands he received shortly. In one of his campaign speeches, after he had just been presented with “the foot of a rabbit killed at midnight in a churchyard during the dark of the moon,” he remarked, “If the people who have given me rabbits’ feet in this campaign will vote for me, there is no possible doubt of my election.” He was soon to be the recipient of all kinds of gifts from his new admirers, and the house in Lincoln was transformed into a museum. An enormous stuffed alligator, who was so long that his tail stuck out of the express wagon, arrived at the Bryan home. It was impossible to find room for it in any one room in the spacious house, so that it was kept in the back yard until the Lincoln museum relieved the family of the embarrassment. Bryan received four huge live eagles, one mule, one pair of suspenders, four volumes of Thomas Jefferson’s works, an ostrich egg, and innumerable canes. Some of these



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were made from the vertebrae of fish, the horns of an antelope, petrified wood, macerated newspaper editorials, lacquered; a few dozen claimed to be made of the original old hickory belonging to Old Hickory Andrew Jackson, and some were said by the senders to have been manufactured from the cherry tree concerning which George Washington never told a lie. There were also canes with silver heads, embellished with daisies of sixteen silver petals and one gold one. “I remember,” wrote Mrs. Bryan, “one of these canes, the head of which represented an eagle whose eyes were made of diamonds, until after a large public reception, when we found that his eyes had mysteriously disappeared.” Fungi which looked like Mr. Bryan, and an egg-shell which suggested his initials, were sent to him. There were countless horseshoes wrapped in tin foil, gilded and beribboned. People also arrived at his home in person and trampled all over the flower beds and broke down the trellises.

But the candidate's mail during the campaign was even more curious than his gifts. In the Library of Congress there are many huge bundles of letters labeled 1896. Some of them give advice and some of them ask for advice on how to live with wives, how to write an essay or to conduct a debate. Articles were sent to him to be autographed, and many women sent pieces of tablecloth which they intended to use in crazy quilts. When some of these articles were lost in the mails, abusive and threatening letters followed. Prophets and seers predicted Bryan's success by the stars, by tea leaves, and in sand. Thousands of men wrote to him concerning their dreams and visions. One man, Mrs. Bryan records, had seen Mr. Bryan's election in a dream, and he offered to dream again, should the candi-

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date desire it, and find out the exact statistical majority Mr. Bryan would receive.

Many men asked for things instead of sending them, and there are hundreds of begging letters in the Bryan Papers. One woman wanted the candidate to send her a pink silk dress, another person asked for a new church building, and a third wished for a bicycle. One farmer asked for two hundred and fifty dollars to save his farm, and one woman wanted three hundred and fifty dollars in order to settle the mortgage on her house and buy a confectionery and bakery. One woman wanted a wheel chair for her husband, who had rheumatism.

More than a thousand letters in Bryan's papers were from people who had named their children after him. Many of them are exceptionally illiterate and scrawled in pencil on scraps of decaying paper. Some of the correspondents had triplets and named them "William," "Jennings," and "Bryan" respectively. Several men were sorry that they had to name their new babies Bryan and Jennings because they already had Williams. Some women regretted that they could not name their girls William, Jennings, or Bryan, but named them after Mrs. Bryan instead. Most of these parents requested a photograph of the candidate so that the boy could look at it when he grew up, and many more thought it only fitting and proper that the candidate should send his new namesake something. Two letters mentioned that the neighbors had jeered and said that Bryan would send his namesakes nothing. One of them read: "we are the only democrat there in our naiberhood thay are all republican thay say you not send any thing there was one of our nabores sent to makindly and he sent them 25 dollars thay are lifted up big." One family had twins, and

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they called one William Jennings Bryan Talmage and the other Jennings William Bryan Talmage.

During the 1896 campaign a boy wrote from Japan, saying that he wished to join Bryan's family and to be educated by him. Bryan answered that he already had three children and could not take care of another. Yamashita arrived in San Francisco and wrote that he would soon be in Nebraska. Bryan hastily wrote a Democratic committee man in San Francisco to discourage the boy. One day a few weeks later Yamashita rang the doorbell of the Bryan home in Lincoln. He knew very little English. The Bryans took him in for the night, and they kept him five and a half years. He went to the public schools and to the Nebraska University and eventually returned to Japan, extremely grateful to the Presidential candidate.

People wrote thousands of poems on Bryan and free silver, and Bryan's Cross of Gold speech inspired Frederic Lowell to write "The American Marseillaise, A Song for the People," Price 10 cents, Per 100 \$6.:

"The American Marseillaise.

"YOU SHALL NOT PRESS THE CROWN OF THORNS UPON
THE TOILER'S BROW.

" 'You shall not press the crown of thorns upon the toiler's
brow.'

This we affirm in freedom's name, with pledge and
solemn vow:

You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.

The time has come when freemen true, shall not be
bought or sold.

“THE ARMOR OF A RIGHTEOUS CAUSE”

Refrain For the People.

“*Alto.* No crown of thorns

Tenor. yes, no crown of thorns, crown of thorns

Alto. shall press the toiler’s brow

Tenor. toiler’s brow.

Alto. No cross of gold

Tenor. yes, no cross of gold, cross of gold

Alto. shall crucify the poor man now.

2

“Our children cry aloud for bread, and while for them we
strive,

The corporations still combine and on our earnings thrive.

In vain we prayed! We beg no more! But on our cause
rely,

Demanding equal rights for all

The trusts we now defy. . . .”

And then it went on for five verses to sing a song of oppression.

Three days after his nomination Bryan left Chicago for a visit to his birthplace in Salem, Illinois, where he made a speech to old friends and neighbors. Then he started for Lincoln, making speeches to enthusiastic crowds on the way. Mr. Bland, acknowledged father of the silver movement, greeted the candidate at Kansas City. “How are you, Mr. Bryan?” said the man who had been the leading candidate. “I congratulate you.” “How are you, Mr. Bland? Thank you,” said Bryan. “Your nomination took a big load off my mind,” said Mr. Bland.

Bryan and his wife received a great ovation when they arrived home in Lincoln, Nebraska. “Upon our small house-

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hold," wrote Mrs. Bryan, "suddenly shone the white light which is said to beat upon the throne. Our very house had altered its appearance when we returned home to it from the Chicago convention. Streamers of bunting festooned it from porch to eaves; small boys sat in rows along the roof; the crowd which filled the front yard overflowed into the house; flowers and smilax decorated the crowded rooms. It was a symbolic atmosphere. The public had invaded our lives."

In other parts of the nation there was some dissatisfaction among Democrats with Bryan's nomination. One section of the party held another convention of gold Democrats and nominated John M. Palmer and Simon B. Buckner as candidates for President and Vice-President. Many of the New York Democrats remained in the party but did not support Bryan actively. When Senator David B. Hill returned home from the convention, a friend asked him, "Are you still a Democrat?" "Yes, I am a Democrat still," said the Senator, "very still." Bryan did not receive the important support of the administration then in power under Grover Cleveland, and most of the eastern Democratic newspapers advocated the gold standard. William Randolph Hearst, who had only recently purchased the New York *Journal*, supported Bryan actively, and his was the only newspaper in New York which advocated his election. Advertisements were taken from the *Journal* because of Hearst's stand, but Hearst hired the most capable writers he could find to discuss Bryan and free silver. The *Journal* also started a campaign fund for Bryan, and Hearst offered to duplicate every dollar subscribed. More than \$40,000 was subscribed.

In the East Bryan was an object of terror as well as

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dislike. Bankers felt that they would be irretrievably ruined if he became President, and those who wished prosperity at all costs felt the same. The Reverend Thomas Dixon told his congregation that Bryan was "a mouthing, slobbering demagogue, whose patriotism is all in his jaw-bone," and "the audience howled," according to the *World*. The Reverend Charles H. Parkhurst said, "I dare, in God's pulpit, to brand such attempts as accursed and treasonable." Theodore Roosevelt, then a police commissioner of New York, said of Bryan and his associates that they were "as regards the essential principles of government, in hearty sympathy with their remote skin-clad ancestors who lived in caves and fought one another with stone-headed axes and ate the mammoth woolly rhinoceros."

In the West Bryan's advocacy of silver was almost a religion. To offset the ridicule of the eastern newspapers which kept calling him "The Boy Orator of the Platte" and Senator Foraker's remark that the Platte River was "six inches deep and six miles wide at the mouth," the Western newspapers called him "The Silver Knight of the West" and "The Black Eagle of Nebraska." His notoriety was almost like that of an eminent prizefighter.

The Populist party convention met in St. Louis and nominated Bryan as its candidate for President, but it refused to endorse Sewall and nominated its leader Tom Watson for Vice-President. The delegates sang:

"No crown of thorns to its brow shall press,
Never again, say we, nor cross of gold mankind distress;
Never again, say we. We'll loosen all the cords that bind;
Give equal chance to all mankind, and here a new Re-
deemer find,
Leading to victory.

"THE ARMOR OF A RIGHTEOUS CAUSE"

Chorus

Chink! Chink! Chink! No crown of thorns for labor's brow!

Chink! Chink! Chink! No cross of gold for mankind now!

Chink! Chink! Chink! We'll not to single standard bow!

Chink! Chink! Chink! We'll vote for freedom now!"

The Silver party met in convention and listened to the Hon. Edward C. Little of Kansas nominate Bryan, and tell them, "The time has come to determine whether this nation is ruled by an Almighty Dollar or by an Almighty God." The convention indorsed Bryan enthusiastically.

It was arranged that Bryan should receive the notification of his nomination and deliver his acceptance speech at Madison Square Garden in New York City, and on August 8, 1896, he left Lincoln, Nebraska, for New York, delivering many short speeches on the way. In the talk which he was persuaded to give to the crowd that gathered at the railroad station in Lincoln, he used a phrase that was used against him during the entire campaign. "In ordinary times," he told his fellow townsmen, "I would have desired to have the notification take place at my home. But this is not an ordinary campaign, and, feeling that the principles in which we are interested should rise above any personal preferences which we may have, I expressed the desire to be notified in New York, in order that our cause might be presented first in the heart of what now seems to be the enemy's country, but which we hope to be our country before this campaign is over." The Republican orators and newspapers seized on the phrase "the enemy's country" and made it appear that Bryan was seeking to renew the sectional strife which was ended by the Civil War. McKinley

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in one of his speeches said, "We know no 'enemy's country' in this fair land of ours."

On the way to New York the train stopped at Canton, Ohio, the home town of William McKinley, where the Republican nominee was making his campaign from his own front porch. An enthusiastic crowd greeted Bryan at the Canton station, and he made them a short speech, in which he asked them to turn to the definition of neighbor in the Scriptures. "In this contest," he said, "I hope to be the neighbor of those who have fallen among thieves."

In New York Bryan was treated with hostile curiosity rather than enthusiasm. The newspapers even begrudged him the curiosity. But, nevertheless, there was a great demand for tickets to the notification meeting. On the morning of August 12 the *New York Tribune* outdid even itself in sour indignation. In an editorial headed "Tonight's Show," the paper said: "It is not strange that there should be a large demand for tickets to the political show advertised to come off at the Madison Square Garden tonight. It would be very strange if there were not, and stranger still if the Garden were not crowded by curiosity-seekers and sightseers. For this will be a show without precedent or parallel. Of infant prodigies, juvenile phenomena and boy wonders there has never been any lack. . . . No dime museum is ever long without at least one of them as a special attraction, and most circuses and menageries habitually carry two or three in their billboards. But tonight's show is of a boy orator of such unusual gifts that he has been able, with one outburst of what seemed to be—until it was touched up with quotation marks in the proofs—spontaneous and unpremeditated eloquence, to carry the Na-

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tional Convention of a great party off its feet and make himself the candidate of the party for the highest office in the Nation. He accomplished this solely by his eloquence. Neither he nor anybody else pretends that he has ever exhibited any other qualification for the office of President of the United States. In that view of him he is certainly an object of curiosity. He is the most successful boy orator the world has ever seen.

“Having captured the nomination by a method never before known with the result of a disruption of the party which nominated him, he has taken another unusual step in making a fifteen-hundred-mile journey to this city to receive the formal notification of his nomination, instead of awaiting that ceremony at his own home. And his reason for this, as has been given out, was that he might, in the first place, exhibit himself to the people at the railroad stations along the line of his journey and give them specimens of the thrilling oratory which fascinated the National Convention, and, second, that he might make an impression upon the citizens of this metropolis who did not favor his nomination and are opposed to his election. In taking this unusual course he certainly demonstrates his confidence in himself, even if it is not a manifestation of the highest courage. Nor has his modesty or self-distrust prevented his announcing beforehand, with the playbill self-assertion of the boy orator, that he was about to carry the war into the enemy’s camp, and in doing so make ‘the greatest effort of his life.’ That he will achieve a great oratorical triumph, the effect of which will be to revolutionize public opinion here and throughout the East, he manifestly has not the slightest doubt.

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“No wonder, then, that public expectation is on tiptoe for tonight’s performance, and that the demand for tickets has been greater than the supply. He will have unquestionably an immense audience, and as it will be the supreme moment of his life he will give them the best of which he is capable. It will be a great show. And if he succeeds in making the impression he is so confident of, we shall have no hesitation in saying that he is not merely a great boy orator, but the most powerful public speaker that ever fed east wind to a mob.”

The fact that Bryan was the youngest man ever nominated for the Presidency—he was thirty-six at the time—was used against him in the East and was considered an advantage in the West.

More than twenty thousand people gathered in Madison Square Garden and the park near by on the night of August 12, the hottest August 12 New York had ever known, according to the newspapers. Many of the tickets which had been mailed were stolen from the post office, and speculators offered them to people in the huge crowd outside. “Here’s your choice seats to hear the Boy Wonder of the West!” they shouted, and sold them for \$2.50. The temperature inside Madison Square Garden was 92°, and in the basement a hospital was set up by Dr. Nammack, the police physician. Tubs of ice and cot beds were placed in the stalls usually occupied by the circus animals.

The crowd was noisy and ready for excitement. When Bryan entered in his black suit and stiff white lawn tie, he looked to the *Times* reporter “more like a professional hypnotist or an actor with baffled aspirations than like a leader to fire a crowd with grace or force of words.” The crowd cheered him enthusiastically and stamped their feet.

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Bryan had determined in advance to read his speech, against the advice of Mrs. Bryan and other friends. But he had been criticized in the East as nothing but a cheap orator, and he wished to make it clear that he could present a reasoned argument. He also wished to ensure accuracy in the reporting of this his first important speech of the campaign.

Bryan began his speech by denying the charge that he and his followers were attacking the rights of private property. “Our campaign,” he assured the people of New York, “has not for its object the reconstruction of society. We cannot insure to the vicious the fruits of a virtuous life; we would not invade the home of the provident in order to supply the wants of the spendthrift; we do not propose to transfer the rewards of industry to the lap of indolence. Property is and will remain the stimulus to endeavor and the compensation for toil.” And then he quoted from the Declaration of Independence to prove that all men were created free and equal, from Abraham Lincoln to prove that the honest toiler could be trusted, and from Andrew Jackson to prove that the common people must be protected. He advocated an income tax and then took up the money question, and he repeated his belief that the only way to obtain a dollar that was honest for all classes of society was to establish a gold and silver ratio. He ended by appealing to the people of New York from Columbia fettered to their own free Statue of Liberty.

The speech was lacking in all Bryan’s favorite oratorical effects, and in it he presented no new arguments nor any old ones in an interesting form. The whole evening was a colossal blunder and a great disappointment. Before Bryan had been speaking long there was the stamping of feet in the hall as men tried to get out of the hot auditorium where

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they were being bored to the freedom of the streets. It has been said on good authority that the Republicans planted groups of fifteen to twenty men in various parts of Madison Square Garden. Soon after Bryan began to speak a group of these men rose in one corner of the huge building, and, without speaking, tramped out as heavily as they could. A few minutes later another group in an opposite part of the Garden rose and tramped out. At first the audience turned and jeered, but finally many of them joined the silent, tramping critics, and the last parts of the speech were read to a much smaller audience than the first. Bryan had made a great psychological error. The people of New York had crowded into the hot building to hear his oratory, and he gave them an exceedingly intricate and dull argument. They had heard of him as the young knight of the West who had proclaimed that it would not be permissible to crucify mankind upon a cross of gold, and they were eager and anxious for another metaphor. The night was too hot for argument. The audience was there for a debauch. Bryan failed to give it to them, and they went back to their hot rooms under the impression that this new wonder-man was no great shakes. A hostile press was able to make the most of this bad impression, and to send it from the gateway of New York throughout the nation. The *Journal* pointed out that Abraham Lincoln also read his speech in New York in 1860, but this did not seem to help. The other papers were ready to attack any speech. When Bryan had spoken of the cross of gold and the crown of thorns, they branded him as a cheap orator, and the day after his notification speech, they declared that he had presented an uninteresting pamphlet. Mr. Bryan went home with the disheartening feeling that there was no satisfying some people. The spite-

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ful *Herald* even denied the size of the crowd: "The gathering which greeted Bryan was, as a matter of fact, no greater than many previous events here. There have been as big crowds at horse shows."

From that day on Bryan hated New York and all it represented with a hatred that remained with him until the last day of his life, and one of the convictions that gave him courage for his last fight at Dayton, Tennessee, was that he was defending the honest yeomanry of the nation from the decadent, filthy cynicism of the big city. There was one spot in New York, however, which Mr. Bryan had not yet come to hate, and that was the headquarters of the local Democratic organization, Tammany Hall. For Mr. Bryan was a practical man, and he did not mind so much with whom he lay down, so long as he was "clad in the armor of a righteous cause." He always managed to exempt Mr. Croker and his associates from his general condemnations of big business and corrupt politics, though it was Mr. Croker, aided by those associates, who had cemented the combination with an effectiveness that was soon to be admired as efficiency. Mr. Bryan had made the smiling statement in New York: "Great is Tammany! And Croker is its prophet." The people of New York, however, did not smile, for they always feared Mr. Croker more than they loved him.

The day after Bryan's speech the stock market improved, and the Republicans breathed more easily. They had been troubled by the anxiety that Bryan might make a favorable impression which would sweep throughout the country, and, through their press and their agents, they had done whatever could be done to prevent such a contingency. But it was impossible to dam up oratory, and they were frankly

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afraid. Bryan played into their hands by refraining from oratory for the occasion.

After this bad start in Madison Square Garden, Bryan carried on a campaign that was the most vigorous Presidential effort which had been made in years. With the bands playing "El Capitan," which had been adopted as the Democratic marching-song, Bryan toured the country, speaking in tiny villages and in large public squares, from the platforms of trains and in huge auditoriums. It was the first time in the history of the country that a Presidential candidate personally toured the nation so extensively and spoke from trains. The hostile newspapers found it undignified, but the people found it fascinating. In a campaign speech at Philadelphia Bryan defended his campaign methods: "One of the papers said that I 'lacked dignity,'" he said. "I have been looking into the matter, and have decided that I would rather have it said that I lacked dignity than have it said that I lack backbone to meet the enemies of the Government who work against its welfare in Wall street. What other Presidential candidates did they ever charge with lack of dignity? [*A voice: 'Lincoln.'*] Yes, my friends, they said it of Lincoln. [*A voice: 'Jackson.'*] Yes, they said it of Jackson. [*A voice: 'And Jefferson.'*] Yes, and of Jefferson; he was lacking in dignity, too. Now, I will tell you how dignified a man ought to be, because, you know, everybody has his idea of these things. I think a man ought to be just dignified enough—not too dignified—and not lacking in dignity. Now, it might be more dignified for me to stay at home and have people come to see me; but you know I said I was not going to promise to give anybody an office, and, therefore, a great many people who might go to see a candidate under some circumstances would not come to see me

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at all. And then, too, our people do not have money to spare. Why, our people are the people who want more money, and if they could come all the way to Nebraska to see me, it might show that they have money enough now." Mr. McKinley was making his campaign from his front porch, and the Republican campaign committee was bringing to that front porch special trains filled with admirers who wore yellow ribbons to signify their love of gold.

Bryan's secretary estimated that he spoke on an average of 60,000 to 100,000 words every day. He made as many as thirty-six speeches in one day. There was one thing, however, he refused to do, and that was to speak on Sunday. He traveled 18,000 miles and it was estimated that he had addressed more than 5,000,000 people. When a railroad company offered him a private car, he expressed the desire to travel as an ordinary passenger, but finally a private car called "The Idler" was provided for him. He did not approve of the name, but the car added to his comfort and his efficiency. As his train passed through the farming districts, he was greeted by enormous crowds. Farmers had started early in the morning in their wagons in order to arrive at the station in time to hear him as he passed through a small town. The large meetings in open spaces were infested with pickpockets, and it was found necessary to add a private detective to Bryan's staff. Pickpockets followed the train from place to place, and once Bryan stopped in the middle of a speech to point out two of them whom he had caught in the act. "After all had turned in for the night," Bryan wrote concerning his travels, "the glare of torchlights and a shout, increasing as we approached and dying out as we departed, notified us of gatherings along the line even where the train did not stop." Some men crowded to small railroad

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stations where the train was compelled to stop for a few moments and shook hands with the sleepy candidate through the window. Bryan reported that at Sandusky, Ohio, “as I was trying to snatch a little sleep between meetings, my dreams were disturbed by such dialogues as the following: ‘Bryan! Bryan! Let us see you! You will lose a hundred votes if you don’t.’ ‘No, Jim, make it fifty.’”

Bryan’s endurance was a marvel to all those who traveled with him. In order to get rest he slept for minutes sitting in his seat, and his appetite remained enormous. One correspondent reported that “on his campaign trips it was not at all uncommon for Mr. Bryan to eat six meals a day.” The newspaper men, whom he liked, found stimulation for their labors in whiskey, and this always made Bryan sad. He never rested in his labors to convert them to temperance, and he never succeeded. One of the correspondents reported that between stops Bryan rubbed his body with gin to remove the perspiration, hung his clothes on a line in his compartment, and then slept for ten, fifteen, or twenty minutes, until he was aroused for the next speech. This correspondent maintained that sometimes when Mr. Bryan came out on the train platform he smelled “like a wrecked distillery.” Before he retired for the night the candidate kneeled and prayed to the tune of the grinding train wheels.

The issues of the campaign of 1896 aroused more interest than those of any campaign since Lincoln had been elected President. G. W. Steevens, correspondent of the London *Daily Mail*, who arrived in America when the campaign was beginning, wrote, “Night and day in every newspaper, in every café, in every street car, it is the dollar, and the dollar alone, whose fate is discussed.” Steevens traveled about



THE CANDIDATE AND HIS WIFE ON TOUR

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the country, trying to find the meaning of the campaign, and his reactions were intelligent. "It is bread-and-butter politics, all through," he concluded, "from Cape Cod to the Golden Gate." In New York he found it difficult to get any impression of the silver movement, for "I can hardly find a man who will go further than such pointed but unenlightening expressions of opinion as 'repudiators,' 'thieves,' 'liars,' and the like. It is almost an insult to ask a New Yorker even to state the case for silver." A young man he met at dinner one night summed it up for him best: "'They're hungry,' he said. 'What's the good of talking sound finance to a man when he's hungry? Feed him first, and then he'll listen. They haven't forgotten Homestead, and they're sore. They know that they can't be worse off than they are, and so they go in for any change. If it's not free silver, it'll be something else. If it's not this time, it'll be next. And they're quite right.' If this is true, the question of this election is of a sort that goes deeper than argumentations of political economy. I almost think that very young man is the first American statesman I have met."

In the East where men made their money by commerce, they wanted a firm gold standard. In the South and West where they made their money by crops, they wanted plenty of currency of any kind to pay their debts and to buy their manufactured articles. They believed, and they were encouraged in that belief by Bryan, that the more money they had, the more they could buy. In the Rocky Mountains they wanted silver because they mined it. In California they mined gold and raised crops. Those who mined gold wanted a gold standard, and those who farmed wanted both gold and silver. Therefore, the Pacific coast States were doubtful.

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Wyoming, in the region of Bryan's territory, wanted gold, because it contained coal mines, owned by eastern capitalists, who were assured of a high protective tariff for their product if McKinley were elected. Underneath the campaign lay a grave economic struggle between sections of the country, the first sectional struggle since the outcome of the Civil War, and men became bitter and excited. "And I own it does not appear to me the best augury for the ultimate unity of this country," wrote Steevens, "that each side appears more set on beating down the opponent than on trying to conciliate his interests with its own. I have not noticed, for instance, that the Republicans have put out any alternative policy to relieve Western agriculture, nor that the Democrats have devised any expedient in the event of their success to break the fall of Eastern business."

Slogans were plentiful in 1896. Bryan and his supporters referred to their opponents as "gold bugs," and McKinley was hailed by his admirers as "the advance agent of prosperity." The Republicans insisted that it was better "to open the mills to work than to open the mints to money." "Sixteen to one" was shouted about and worn on clothes, and the answer was "Sound Money" and "An Honest Dollar." Ardent Republicans remarked, "In God We Trust, in Bryan We Bust." "Free silver" was an excellent slogan, except among business men, for it implied something for nothing, which was attractive to everybody except the man who was trying to sell something.

Poems filled the newspapers and were circulated in pamphlets. The best of these on the silver side was the following, published by "Coin" Harvey, the leading silver propagandist, whose pamphlets sold by the hundreds of thousands and are now almost impossible to find.

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“The Songs uv Samyewel

(BY SAM FONOGRAF)

“the prise uv wheet wuz fawling fast
as up wall street a banker past
hiz klose perfumed and smellin nise
while threw hiz hed ran this devise
sownd munney

“from albion’s shores heed just arrived
with plans mature & well kontrived
& softly in the kokney tung
he warbled owt with hiz wun lung
sownd munney

“in church you mite have herd him sing
& thank the lord fer everything
& if perchance he fell asleep
heed mix with amens lowd & deep
sownd munney

“in happy homes he saw the lite
uv big log fires blaze up at nite
& az he thot uv morgege lones
he sang agen in lowder tones
sownd munney

“o stay thy hand the widow kride
evikt not those so harshly tride
he simply sed ekonomize
& then thay herd abuv her kryss
sownd munney

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“kum stop those tricks abe linkun sed
fer dern yer skin ime fer frum ded
ile set the people 2 tan yer hide
but stil that kokney voise replied
sownd munney

“wun day thay fown him stif & kold
(a suiside so i wuz told)
hiz korps $\frac{1}{2}$ ett up by rats & mise
but on hiz shirt frunt this devise
sownd munney.”

The Republicans realized that they had a sentiment and a cause to fight, and they were frightened, because Bryan, the leader of that cause, was more sentimental than McKinley, and more convinced of the righteousness of his battle than Presidential candidates usually find it necessary to be. Mark Hanna, the business manager of McKinley's campaign, was far from sentimental, but just as convinced of the divinity of business as Bryan was of that of Christ. And Hanna knew from a wide experience in Ohio business and politics that a lot could be done against principles with money. He therefore set about raising the largest campaign fund ever used in the history of the United States. The clerk of the House of Representatives estimated that the Republican campaign fund in 1896 was \$16,500,000 and the Democratic \$425,000. Mr. Hanna visited New York. He did not need to impress the captains of finance with the importance of defeating Mr. Bryan. They were already sufficiently worried. Every bank was assessed one quarter of 1 per cent. of its capital, and the sums were paid gladly, for there was no telling how much capital they would have left if Mr. Bryan should be elected, according to their fear-

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ful view of his demagoguery. The insurance companies also contributed liberally to Mr. Hanna's educational fund, and the Standard Oil Company gave \$250,000. "Mr. Hanna always did his best to convert the practice from a matter of political begging on the one side and donating on the other," wrote Herbert Croly, his biographer, "into a matter of systematic assessment according to the means of the individual and institution." Mr. Croly also claims that the size of the Republican fund has been greatly exaggerated, and that the audited accounts revealed that the campaign committee collected less than \$3,500,000 of which "a little over \$3,000,000 came from New York and its vicinity, and the rest from Chicago and its vicinity."

Mark Hanna waged what was called an educational campaign. It was estimated that the Republicans sent out 120,000,000 pamphlets, mainly on the currency question. In Hebrew, in German, in French, in Italian, and in the Scandinavian languages pamphlets and leaflets were thrown about the country arguing against the free-silver agitation, for the edification of those who could not read the blasts in the papers published in English and in the thousands of pamphlets and books sent about in that language. About two hundred and seventy-five different pamphlets were written and distributed. Country newspapers received three and a half columns of propaganda every week. Carloads of cartoons, posters, and buttons were shipped about the country. To counteract Bryan's statements against perfidious Albion the Republicans issued a pamphlet called *How McKinley Is Hated in England*. Most of the Republican literature had the same theme, namely, that if Bryan were elected, business men might as well shut up shop, laborers and their families would starve to death, widows and

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orphans would lose their bank deposits, and farmers' crops would rot in the fields. The “Wholesale Dry Goods Republicans” sang:

“Before Billy Bryan was thought of,
The taking of orders was fun;
Then a man used to say, ‘Send sixteen,’
But now he says, ‘Send only one.’”

One large silk manufacturer paid his employees, who had been Democrats, in Mexican dollars, to indicate what a silver dollar would be worth. When the employees found they could only get fifty cents for each silver Mexican dollar, they decided to be good Republicans and vote for McKinley. Near election day other employers of labor put up signs on their factories announcing to employees that they need not return to work after election day if Mr. Bryan were elected: *Verbum sap.* and Q.E.D. It was said at the time that the insurance companies, which had agents in the farming districts, sent them instructions to inform farmers whose mortgages were held by the companies that if McKinley were elected they could have extensions of their loans at low rates of interest. The newspapers announced contracts made by companies for improvements and materials contingent upon the election of McKinley and the defeat of Bryan. Champ Clark wrote in his memoirs: “The only time in my life that I was ever flatly refused credit was one day when I asked a bank to cash a draft for ten dollars to go some distance to make a speech for Bryan.”

The Republicans had an army of 1,400 campaign speakers, who were rushed into every district where it looked as if Bryan might be successful, and they were accompanied by tons of reading-matter. McKinley himself refused to

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tour the country in the undignified manner of his opponent, and therefore the campaign committee decided that the country must come to McKinley, and it paid the expenses. Several times each week during the campaign special trains filled with McKinley admirers pulled into Canton, Ohio. The joyous pilgrims marched from the station up to McKinley's house. McKinley came out on the front porch. The chairman of the visiting delegation made a short speech, sometimes not nearly short enough, and then McKinley answered it with thanks and arguments. The trains which bore the delegations to Canton were draped in yellow bunting. Each man and woman wore a yellow badge, and some had yellow flowers and yellow caps in addition, so that there might be no mistake about their desire for gold. The crowds looked to one observer like a field of buttercups.

In Chicago in October the Republicans held a parade in which delegations of broom-makers carried gold brooms and stockyard workers wore capes of cloth of gold—made of paper. The same night the Democrats held a parade in which a row of sheeted ghosts marched through the crowded streets bearing this explanatory banner: “Murdered in Pennsylvania by Carnegie.”

The greatest gold demonstration, however, took place in New York City on Saturday, October 31, a few days before election day. Every profession and business was represented by marchers and floats and banners. The silver men admitted that 80,000 men took part in the parade, and the gold men doubled the number. The New York *Herald* counted 99,195 men in the parade. It was the largest parade held since the men of the Union Army marched in Washington after the Civil War. Early in the morning the head of the

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procession arrived at the reviewing-stand in Madison Square, and the tail of it did not reach there until half-past six in the evening. Many of the paraders wore yellow chrysanthemums; delegations of fruit men carried oranges to indicate their money preferences, and the members of the Produce Exchange carried sheaves of golden wheat. Little gold bugs were sold on the streets, and one delegation of marchers wore large gold bugs as epaulettes. A huge float rolled by bearing a gigantic gold bug, whose mouth opened and displayed the words, “I Eat Boy Orators.” There were golden doves, golden beetles, golden elephants, and a huge goldfish whose mouth was pulled open with a string and revealed the words, “Hurrah for McKinley!” “The insurance men,” said the official account of the parade, “wore gold medals covering half their chests, and gold bugs on their trousers’ legs, which flapped their wings for two minutes every time they were screwed up.” The dry goods men headed their procession with a boy dressed entirely in yellow and wearing a clown’s cap, bearing the legend, “Hully Gee!” The delegation of the Bankers’ and Brokers’ Sound Money Associations consisted of 5,000 men, and one line in the parade represented to the *New York Journal* “a combined fortune of nearly \$30,000,000 with Mr. G. P. Morisini at one end and Isidor Wormser at the other.” When the bankers passed the reviewing-stand, one man shouted out, “Where’s Pierpont Morgan?” and everybody looked eagerly. But Mr. Morgan was not parading. Across the reviewing-stand was an enormous banner, with the slogan, “We Know No ‘Enemy’s Country’ In This Fair Land of Ours.”

Late at night there were rival Bryan and McKinley meetings in Madison Square, and the crowds exchanged

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arguments, then jeers, insults, and finally blows, until the police arrived and drove them away. "Each party," wrote Steevens, "accuses the other of provocation, but the real instigator of the riot was whiskey on an empty stomach."

Meanwhile, Bryan was making his spectacular speaking-tour of the country. To an immense crowd on Boston Common he quoted Wendell Phillips, Emerson, and Whittier. "Your poet Whittier used these words," he said:

"Tell us not of banks and tariffs,
Cease your paltry peddler cries;
Shall the good State sink her honor
That your gambling stocks may rise?"

At Yale College the children broke up Mr. Bryan's meeting by singing, shouting, and yelling, "Rah, rah, rah, Yale!" Bryan stopped speaking and ended the meeting, but he got angry first and told the students, "I have been so used to talking to young men who earn their own living that I hardly know what language to use to address myself to those who desire to be known, not as the creators of wealth, but as the distributors of wealth which somebody else created." A mass meeting of the Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, and Seminole Indians held in Indian Territory adopted the following resolution: "Resolved, That we contemplate with deep regret the recent insulting treatment of William J. Bryan by students of a college in the land of the boasted white man's civilization, and we admonish all Indians who think of sending their sons to Yale that association with such students could but prove hurtful alike to their morals and their progress toward the higher standard of civilization." Two boys in New York were arrested for throwing

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eggs at Mr. Bryan, but they were released on his recommendation.

In other parts of the country, however, Bryan was received with great enthusiasm. The Beattyville *Enterprise*, a newspaper published in the Kentucky mountains, printed this lyric on Bryan, which the writer composed after he had heard Bryan speak to 50,000 people at the fair grounds: “Such a radiant countenance, such a noble, manly bearing, such majestic godlike tread, never enchained their eyes before. In form and features perfect, with force of character and honesty of purpose, impressed by the great Creator on the most serious and supremely earnest face we ever saw, with ‘head and shoulders like a god,’ this man of destiny, this deliverer of the people, swayed the vast multitude with his eloquence and enraptured them with his matchless presence. We do not hesitate to say that we believe Mr. Bryan to be the greatest and most remarkable human being we ever saw, and if the worlds and universes which follow the courses fixed by nature do not slip a cog he will be the next President.” Enthusiasm for Bryan led a man in Montana to write a long poem called “When Bryan Came to Butte.” The author imagined all the pomp of Roman triumph in his first stanza and ended it with:

“For these monster Roman triumphs, at which not a stone
was mute,
Couldn’t hold a Roman candle—
When Bryan came to Butte.”

Then the poet took up Napoleon’s return from Elba and described how enthusiastic the emperor’s followers were for him “to pull off another fight”:

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“But the passion that they cherished for this brilliant
French galoot
Was as zero to that witnessed
When Bryan came to Butte.”

In his many campaign speeches Bryan emphasized the war of classes which the campaign represented. For this he was accused of anarchy, demagoguery, and of stirring the passions of the mob, but he could do nothing else, for the war of classes was the fundamental issue of the struggle. He questioned the motives of the bankers and insisted upon the rights of the common man. Sometimes he took advantage of cheap tricks which attracted some of his audience and clouded the issue. When he was speaking at Fredericksburg, Virginia, he told the audience that he was glad to visit the historic place where George Washington threw a silver dollar across the river. “Would you believe, my friends,” he asked, “that a silver dollar which was good enough to be handled by the father of his country is so mean a thing as to excite the contempt of many of our so-called financiers? Well, it is. It is so mean that they do not like it. Why, our opponents tell us that they want a dollar that will go all over the world. We have had dollars which have gone over the world so rapidly that we want a dollar that will stay at home without a curfew law. Our opponents tell us that they want a dollar which they can see anywhere in the world if they travel abroad. I am not so much worried about our dollars which travel abroad. I want a dollar that will not be ashamed to look a farmer in the face.”

Most of the newspapers were very impatient with Bryan's arguments, and sometimes they manufactured stories

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about his character and the facts of his life. Soon after the campaign, when the lies which he had had to ignore or to answer were fresh in his mind, Bryan wrote concerning a visit to Yellowstone Park: “Not far from the edge of the lake there is a mud geyser, as it is commonly called. It is a funnel-shaped hole and contains several feet of thin mud. Every few moments a puff of gas coming up from below spatters the mud against the sides of the hole and by the time the mud has fallen back into the pit, it is again blown out. When I visited the mud geyser the campaign of 1896 was fresh in my mind, and the working plan of the mud geyser recalled the editorial policy of some of the opposition papers, especially the *New York Tribune*.” It was published that Bryan was in the pay of the silver-mine owners, that his real name was O'Bryan, which seemed to be considered a sin, that he had been a cheap actor, that he was a member of the anti-Catholic A.P.A., that he had applied for a job as press agent of the Herald Square Theater in New York just before his nomination, and finally that he was really insane. The *New York Times* devoted many columns to the discussions by alleged alienists of Bryan's sanity. A man who wrote to the *Times* and signed himself “Alienist” was sure that Bryan's speeches and actions indicated that he was suffering from megalomania, “paranoia querulenta,” “querulent logorrhoea,” fixed ideas, delusions, “graphomania,” which made him talk so much, “oratorical monomania,” and that he had developed from obscurity into what the Italians called a “political mattoid” and the Germans a case of “paranoia reformatoria.” The *Times* showed this letter to seven alienists and got the answers from most of them that it wanted. Dr. Frederick Peterson, author of *The Stigmata of Degeneration*,

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told a *Times* reporter, "We must rid our minds of the idea that Mr. Bryan is ordinarily crazy. . . . But I should like to examine him for a degenerate." And "Alienist's" letter was copied into newspapers in Chicago and other cities.

Bryan continued to carry on his terrific battle for the things in which he believed so strongly and for the people with whom he sympathized so sincerely until the last minute, even though the odds were against him, due to the difference in the financial resources of his friends and his enemies, and due to the unfair attitude of the press. At a few minutes before midnight on November 2 he delivered his last speech of the campaign, and the twenty-seventh of that day. Just as the campaign was nearing its end the price of wheat rose, relieving somewhat the distress of the farmers, and some men have claimed that this was the most important factor in the result of the election. The Republicans, having all the money they needed to spend, spent a great deal of it getting voters to the polls. Men who were working and would lose time while going to vote were paid for their time, and farmers who had to leave their fields were paid for the loss of their own time and that of their hired help. Farmers were also hired to transport voters in their wagons. Meanwhile, Bryan was struggling practically alone, for the machine politicians of the Democratic party who always do so much of the practical work of getting the voters interested and getting them to vote as they want them to vote, had given up hope of his election. If they had thought he had a chance, they would have worked strenuously in order that later they might share the spoils.

In spite of all the preparations no one was certain of the result, and the tensivity was greater than that of any election since the Civil War. In New York City the campaign had

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ended with the monster gold parade of Saturday and the mass meetings of both parties at night. Sunday was a restless day, full of suspense, and Monday seemed interminable. There was stagnation in Wall Street and nervous uncertainty throughout the city. The bankers wondered whether any little thing had been forgotten, whether it was still possible for Mr. Bryan to be elected. The London correspondent, G. W. Steevens, who was in New York on election day, wrote, “Nobody can see how it is possible for Mr. Bryan to win, and yet nobody would be surprised if he did.” Early in the morning of Tuesday, November 3, men hurried to the polls, and the small boys began their bonfires. Toward evening huge crowds gathered in City Hall Park and around the newspaper buildings. “Thousands of tin horns sputtered.” And Tammany Hall was dark at eleven o’clock.

In his house in Lincoln, Nebraska, Bryan was in bed. He needed rest badly. Downstairs in the library newspaper men gathered with Mrs. Bryan and received the bulletins, which she carried upstairs to the bedroom at regular intervals. “As the evening progressed,” wrote Bryan, “the indications pointed more and more strongly to defeat, and by eleven o’clock I realized that, while the returns from the country might change the result, the success of my opponent was more than probable. Confidence resolved itself into doubt, and doubt, in turn, gave place to resignation. While the compassionless current sped hither and thither, carrying its messages of gladness to foe and its message of sadness to friend, there vanished from my mind the vision of a President in the White House, perplexed by the cares of state, and, in the contemplation of the picture of a citizen by his fireside, free from official responsibility, I fell asleep.” A

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stranger stopped Bryan's eleven-year-old daughter, Ruth, and asked her whether she thought her father would be elected. "I think he will get a good many votes on D Street, but I do not know about the rest of the country," she replied.

The final result of the election showed that McKinley received 7,035,638 and Bryan 6,467,946. In the electoral college the vote was 271 for McKinley, 176 for Bryan. A change of some 900 votes in California would have given Bryan that State's electoral vote, and a change of 142 votes would have given him Kentucky. A total change of 14,001 votes distributed in the proper States would have given him a majority of three electoral votes.

Governor Altgeld of Illinois felt that the odds against the Democratic party had been too much for it to overcome by the natural will of the people. "It was confronted," he said, "by all the trusts, all the syndicates, all the corporations, all the great papers. It was confronted by everything that money could buy, that boodle could debauch, or that fear of starvation could coerce. It was confronted by the disgust which the majority of the American people felt toward the national administration, for which they held us responsible. It was confronted by the unfounded charge of being partly responsible for the hard times. It was confronted by a combination of forces such as had never been united before and will probably never be united again; and worse still, the time was too short to educate the public." Henry George said after the 1896 election, "What did free silver matter, the people have lost again." It was true that the "people" had lost again, but whether they would have won had Bryan been elected is possible of doubt, for Bryan, much as he felt for the common man, also believed in the

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capitalist system, and it was only by means of a more or less complete change in that system that the so-called people would have won anything worth winning. If he had ever been President of the United States, Bryan would undoubtedly have ameliorated the condition of the laboring man to the best of his ability, but he would only have been permitted to do so if his influence with Democratic Senators and Representatives had been more powerful than the influence of corporate industry with those Senators and Representatives. He would have advocated an income tax, arbitration of industrial disputes, and other palliatives, but he would not have attacked the disease, for he dared not believe that it was a disease. His heart-felt interest in the good, the true, and the beautiful as he conceived them blinded him to some of the underlying obscenities of everyday life under an industrial civilization.

The bankers were overjoyed at the result. H. H. Kohl-saat, the Republican owner of the *Chicago Times-Herald*, found a group of them playing “Follow the leader” in a Chicago club after midnight of election day. The nimble elderly gentlemen were jumping over chairs and tables and dancing in each other’s arms. “A little after midnight,” he wrote, “I rang up McKinley at Canton. His nephew, James McKinley, answered the phone. I asked him to let me speak to the President-elect. After some minute’s wait young McKinley said: ‘I found Uncle Will in his mother’s room. The old lady is kneeling beside the bed with one arm around the governor and the other around Aunt Ida, praying. All I heard was: ‘Oh, God, keep him humble.’ ”

Some men were downcast at the result. Bryan had begged his followers not to bet on him, because he did not believe in gambling. Some of them disregarded the advice and

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found that they were pledged not to shave until Bryan became President, to haul Republican friends around the town in wheelbarrows, to roll peanuts long distances, and to ride donkeys from New York to San Francisco. One of these last finally arrived on his donkey at the Bryan house in Lincoln, Nebraska. He was paying the expenses of the journey by selling patent medicines and photographs of the donkey and its trappings. One man wrote Bryan that he had bet on Mr. Bryan the money he had intended to use to mend his roof. "My house is leaking badly," he wrote. "Please send the money at once." Another man wrote that he had bet his cow, and that now his poor children had no milk. One man sent Bryan a bill for eighty-seven dollars, because he had lost that amount of money when gunpowder set off to greet Mr. Bryan had prevented the eggs he had placed in an incubator from hatching. There are in Bryan's papers many letters from children telling him how they had wept when they heard the news of his defeat. One of these follows:

"Everett March 12, 1897

"Dear Mr. Bryan ever since the election I have so badly wanted to tell you how sorry I was when you was defeated. Papa and mamma were so strong for Bryan that I learned to love you oh I loved you so well I thought it was impossible to give up! The next morning after the election I heard children hollering for McKinley I asked mamma if I might holler for Bryan she said wait till we hear the real news then if he is the man you can yell all you want to. When the real news came I took a good cry. Mamma cried too but she wouldend let on. We have a book with your picture in She pressed it to her lips and said poor man

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but I do pity you you dont need to care for mamma is a pretty woman I am only a poor little girl 14 years old but I did want to tell you how sorry I was and I did not know where to write till I saw an answer to a letter in a paper then I took a notion to write. No one knows I am going to write. I don't want them to know it. I hope you will not be cross at me for writing to you. I want to tell you some thing I had thought of if you was elected but oh don't tell any one I asked mamma how much you would get a year she told me that seemed so much I thought after you would get to Washington I would write a very pretty letter to Mrs. Bryan and tell her how bad I wanted to take lessons in music and we were not able I thought maybe she would help me. Papa got me an organ on monthly payments he said maybe I could take lessons after the organ was paid for but it seems so long to wait he works at a furnace and only gets ninety cents a day aint that a little bit to keep a family on I do love music so well you ought to hear how I can play a-ready I can play sweet home Sweet bye and by happy day and two little girls in blue Give my love to Mrs. Bryan tell her how sorry I am oh but I would like to have one of your pictures and one of Mrs. Bryans too.

“Good by dear good man I hope you are well and happy

“Yours little friend

“_____”

Bryan himself found some comfort in a poem by the late Ella Wheeler Wilcox called “An Inspiration”:

“However the battle is ended

Though proudly the victor comes

With fluttering flags and prancing nags

And echoing roll of drums,

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Still truth proclaims this motto

In letters of living light—

No question is ever settled

Until it is settled right. . . .

“Let those who have failed take courage;

Tho’ the enemy seems to have won,

Tho’ his ranks are strong, if he be in the wrong

The battle is not yet done;

For, sure as the morning follows

The darkest hour of the night,

No question is ever settled

Until it is settled right.”

Vachel Lindsay expressed his feelings some years later in a poem called “Bryan, Bryan, Bryan, Bryan”:

“Election night at midnight:

Boy Bryan’s defeat.

Defeat of western silver.

Defeat of the wheat.

Victory of letterfiles

And plutocrats in miles

With dollar signs upon their coats,

Diamond watchchains on their vests

And spats on their feet.

Victory of custodians, Plymouth rock,

And all that inbred-landlord stock.

Victory of the neat.

Defeat of the aspen groves of Colorado valleys,

The bluebells of the Rockies,

And blue bonnets of old Texas,

By the Pittsburgh alleys.

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Defeat of alfalfa and the Mariposa lily.

Defeat of the Pacific and the long Mississippi.

Defeat of the young by the old and silly.

Defeat of tornadoes by the poison vats supreme.

Defeat of my boyhood, defeat of my dream.”

The New York *Tribune* forgot its exultation at the result of the election and poured forth its venom on the hateful Bryan and his cause in one of the most vituperative editorials ever printed in a respectable publication: “The thing was conceived in iniquity and was brought forth in sin. It had its origin in a malicious conspiracy against the honor and integrity of the nation. It gained such monstrous growth as it enjoyed from an assiduous culture of the basest passions of the least worthy members of the community. It has been defeated and destroyed because right is right and God is God. Its nominal head was worthy of the cause. Nominal, because the wretched, rattle-pated boy, posing in vapid vanity and mouthing resounding rottenness, was not the real leader of that league of hell. He was only a puppet in the blood-imbued hands of Altgeld, the anarchist, and Debs, the revolutionist, and other desperadoes of that stripe. But he was a willing puppet, Bryan was, willing and eager. Not one of his masters was more apt than he at lies and forgeries and blasphemies and all the nameless iniquities of that campaign against the Ten Commandments. He goes down with the cause, and must abide with it in the history of infamy. He had less provocation than Benedict Arnold, less intellectual force than Aaron Burr, less manliness and courage than Jefferson Davis. He was the rival of them all in deliberate wickedness and treason to the Republic. His name belongs with theirs, neither the

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most brilliant nor the most hateful in the list. Good riddance to it all, to conspiracy and conspirators, and to the foul menace of repudiation and anarchy against the honor and life of the republic.” But the poor editor of the New York *Tribune*, who knew so well what right was right and which god was God, was destined to hear of Mr. Bryan again.

When it was all over, in the book he wrote about the campaign, Bryan himself made this happy statement: “The reminiscences of the campaign of 1896 form such a delightful chapter in memory’s book that I am constrained to paraphrase a familiar line and say that it is better to have run and lost than never to have run at all.” Bryan also said in a speech that he felt as Vance, of North Carolina, felt: “Some one asked him if it did not nearly kill him to have the people pulling him around and shaking hands with him. He replied: ‘Yes, it does nearly kill me, but if they did not do it, it would entirely kill me.’ ”

CHAPTER IV

"AN INEXHAUSTIBLE PATIENCE SET TO MUSIC"

IN ONE of his Bible essays Bryan wrote that in the story of Job "we find an inexhaustible patience set to music." And in that phrase he summed up perfectly that period of his own career from the time when he was first defeated for President until 1912, when he ceased to be a serious candidate and helped Woodrow Wilson to the Presidency.

After the election of 1896 Bryan received offers from all over the country for his services in various capacities. The day after election the New York department store, Siegel-Cooper Company, sent Bryan a telegram offering him a salary of \$25,000 a year as the manager of its law department. He declined the offer. He also received offers from lecture bureaus and newspapers. Bradford Merrill, editor of the *World*, wrote him a letter enclosing a check for \$1,000 for an article Bryan had written for the *World*, and requested more. *The Gentleman Farmer* offered \$10,000 for ten articles on bimetallism. The *Deutsches Revue*, of Wiesbaden, wanted an article on the McKinley tariff. Bryan also wrote *The First Battle*, a book on his campaign, which sold almost 200,000 copies, and he devoted one-half the royalties to the various associations interested in furthering the cause of free silver.

Bryan started on a lecture tour at the end of 1896, but there were rumors that it was not successful, and there was

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dissatisfaction on the part of the managers, who had guaranteed Bryan \$50,000 for fifty lectures. Whatever the reason, the tour was discontinued, and Bryan went back to Lincoln, where, in the midst of his other work, he proceeded to answer the 60,000 letters he had received from admirers during the campaign. During 1897 he lectured on bimetallism and reiterated his belief in free coinage of silver. At a large meeting in Carnegie Hall, New York, he expressed his contempt for "the man who, knowing what he does, deaf to the entreaties of the poor and blinded to the suffering he would cause, would strike down one of the metals given by the Almighty himself for the use of man." In 1897 he also toured Ohio, speaking against the reelection of Mark Hanna as Senator from Ohio. This tour, and his other speaking engagements and writings, helped to keep Bryan's name before the people and aided him to win the nomination in 1900. Large crowds of farmers attended the meetings, and there were frequent shouts of "We'll elect you next time." In one of his speeches Bryan said, "Defeat Hanna and the whole world will rejoice; elect the Republican ticket and every monarch on a European throne will be joyful!" The people threw up their hats and yelled, but they reelected Hanna. In one of his speeches Bryan once said: "It is the purpose of the orator to persuade, and to do this he presents, not himself, but his subjects. Some one, in describing the difference between Demosthenes and Cicero, said that 'when Cicero spoke, people said, "How well Cicero speaks"; but when Demosthenes spoke, they said, "Let us go against Philip."'" Bryan suffered from the same disadvantage as Cicero. When people heard him speak, they said, "How well he speaks," and then they voted for McKinley. Many of the people who heard Bryan speak

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were not especially impressed by what he said. He could stir them for the moment sometimes, but when they got home they felt as if they had been to a restaurant and instead of dinner had been served nothing but sentimental songs. However, there were always sufficient numbers who did not want meat in their speeches to make Bryan's influence continuously powerful.

During 1897 Bryan also visited Mexico, where he was greeted enthusiastically as the great champion of silver.

While Bryan was lecturing and writing, President McKinley had his hands full trying to prevent a war which he did not want with Spain for the sake of Cuban independence and the colonial expansion of the United States. The war was finally made inevitable by those who were aroused by the atrocities committed in Cuba and those who saw a great chance for business both as a result of the war and during it. Bryan, though he hated war, spoke in favor of the recognition of Cuban independence, which he knew meant war, and in that way he lent his influence somewhat to the forces which were rapidly stampeding McKinley and the government into a reluctant war. When war finally came, Bryan joined the army, and he was permitted to raise a regiment, of which he was the colonel. Men wrote to him from all over the country expressing their desire to serve under him. His regiment was sent to Florida and remained in camp there all during the war. Bryan served in the army from July 13, 1898, until December 12, 1898, when his regiment of Third Nebraska Volunteer Infantry was mustered out. This service prevented him from taking any part in the elections of 1898.

As the election of 1900 approached, Bryan devoted himself exclusively to political issues and to making his own

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nomination inevitable. Soon after he was released from the army, he played an important part in the ratification of the treaty with Spain. There was great opposition to the ratification of that treaty by men of both the Republican and the Democratic parties who felt that the treaty, by its clause providing for the annexation of the Philippine Islands, committed the United States to an imperialistic course. It was extremely doubtful that the treaty would be ratified, when Bryan appeared suddenly in Washington and visited Democratic Senators and urged them to vote for its ratification. He told them that the issue of imperialism was one that was badly needed in the coming campaign of 1900, and the treaty was ratified by only one vote more than the required two-thirds. Bryan always defended his action by saying that he felt the treaty should be ratified and the war settled as soon as possible, but as there was no prospect of renewed hostilities, but merely a question of terms, this argument was a lame excuse by a politician in need of thunder.

Less than a week after the ratification of the treaty with Spain, Bryan issued a denunciation of imperialism and urged that the struggling Filipinos be given immediate independence. It was a clever political move, for the Democrats had very little ammunition for the coming campaign. During the administration of McKinley there had been a wave of great prosperity due to renewed business confidence and to the industrial activity created by the Spanish-American War. The war had also helped to kill the sectional differences aroused by the campaign for free silver in 1896. Meanwhile, the gold production of the world had steadily increased, and the invention of the cyanide process of extracting gold from low-grade ore made it very unlikely

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that that metal would be too scarce for many years. Other developments in the mining industry helped to make free silver a dead issue, for there had been new discoveries of gold in Australia, South Africa, and the Klondike.

Although he knew that the issue was dying, and although he had a new one in wicked Republican imperialism, Bryan insisted that the free coinage of silver must still be advocated by the Democratic party. Many of his closest friends advised him to give it up, but Bryan clung to silver. He had talked so much about it that he could not believe that he had been mistaken, and he also realized the political disadvantage in admitting that he had been wrong once. To his last days he maintained that the free coinage of silver was a just and effective remedy for the financial ills of the country, and he seized upon the great increase in gold to account for the fact that the remedy was no longer needed.

During the winter of 1898 and 1899 Bryan met Colonel House, with whom he was to become more intimately associated later in his career. Bryan's younger daughter, Grace, had not been well, and the family decided to spend the winter in the South. Colonel House arranged a home for Bryan within the grounds where his own home was located, so that Colonel House and Colonel Bryan had many opportunities of discussing national affairs. "I found Mrs. Bryan very amenable to advice and suggestion," Colonel House wrote, "but Mr. Bryan was as wildly impracticable as ever. I do not believe that any one ever succeeded in changing his mind upon any subject that he had determined upon. . . . I believe he feels that his ideas are God-given and are not susceptible to the mutability of those of the ordinary human being. He often told me that

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a man that did not believe in ‘the free and unlimited coinage of silver at 16-1 was either a fool or a knave.’ He was so convinced of this that he was not susceptible to argument.” In 1899 Bryan wrote to Willis J. Abbot, who was then one of William Randolph Hearst’s close advisers, “I can say to bimetallism at 16 to 1 as Ruth said to Naomi: ‘Entreat me not to leave thee, or to refrain from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.’”

Although he remained faithful to free silver and welcomed the issue of imperialism, there was still another problem to which Bryan gave prominence in his political propaganda at this time. When the twentieth century dawned, there was a mania upon the part of the newspapers for symposia concerning the future. The *New York World* requested an opinion from William Jennings Bryan concerning the greatest menace of the coming century. He wrote, “The increasing influence of wealth will lead to increasing disregard of the inalienable rights of man.” At a conference in Chicago in September, 1899, Bryan advocated a Federal license law for all trusts and monopolies, and he also proposed laws against stock watering and regulations requiring corporations to certify to their earnings and expenses, with penitentiary sentences for violations of these laws. A few years later Bryan offered this sarcastic suggestion: “A commission should be appointed to definitely fix the amount of wealth one must possess before being classed as a kleptomaniac instead of a thief. The same commission could also fix the amount which a man must

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steal before becoming a Napoleon of finance instead of being a common embezzler. There is now so much leeway afforded that the public is often led to grievously wrong a man by calling him a thief or an embezzler when in truth he is either a kleptomaniac or a financier. This is because of not having a definite amount fixed from which to measure judgment. This appears to be one of the crying needs of the hour.”

While Bryan was preparing to denounce and to deplore, the Republicans were getting ready to fight the election of 1900 on the principle that the Republican party was in Washington and all was right with the world. Mark Hanna expressed the policy of the party and at the same time contributed a new expression to the nation's political vocabulary when he remarked, “All we need to do is ‘stand pat.’” The Republican party has followed his advice ever since. Early in 1900, however, the anthracite coal miners struck for a 10 per cent. increase in their wages. Mark Hanna told the coal operators that it would be the better part of valor to give the men what they wanted, rather than to run the chance of having Mr. Bryan in the White House. This was enough to frighten the coal barons, and the strike was settled.

The period of unprecedented prosperity during the administration of William McKinley had been accompanied by consolidation in industry and the development of trusts. Bryan and the Democrats denounced this corporate development, and McKinley and the Republicans accepted it and profited by it. Mark Hanna was able to raise from the large corporations as much money as he needed, and if they did not send as much as he thought they should, he sent back their checks and demanded more. The Republican



“THE MIRAGE IN THE DESERT”

(From *Life*, September, 1902. By permission of the publishers.)

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convention assembled and renominated William McKinley, indorsed his administration, and sent forth throughout the country the gospel of the “full dinner-pail.” Theodore Roosevelt was forced to accept the position of Vice-President, because the boss of New York State, Tom Platt, wanted to get rid of so much righteous indignation, and because the Republicans needed a picturesque speaker to counteract the effect of Bryan’s prodigious tours.

When the Democratic National Convention met at Kansas City, it was a foregone conclusion that William Jennings Bryan would be nominated again for the Presidency. There were some eastern Democrats who hated to see this but could not discover any way of preventing it. And then too they felt that it was impossible to defeat McKinley, for there could be no doubt that there had been prosperity during his régime, and that was the most important fact for the millions of voters. The Democrats felt that the losing candidate might as well be Bryan as any one else, especially since they were in that predicament which was to be theirs for so many years—they had no one else whose influence and glamour approached Bryan’s in importance. Bryan’s personal influence among the farmers and small business men was still so great that it could be used to advantage to elect local Congressional and State candidates, even if it was not powerful enough to elect Mr. Bryan himself. And Mr. Bryan was more than willing to enjoy the personal publicity of another attempt.

Strénuous efforts, however, were made to prevent Bryan from forcing the issue of free silver upon the Democratic party once more. Senator David B. Hill made a trip to Lincoln, Nebraska, which was of a similar nature to the famous trip of Henry IV to Canossa. He begged Mr. Bryan

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to forget free silver, for the sake of the Democratic party. But Mr. Bryan insisted that the free-silver plank of the Chicago platform of 1896 must be reaffirmed.

At this time Bryan was urging William Randolph Hearst, whose success with the *New York Journal* had been established, to start a Democratic daily newspaper in Chicago. Among the Bryan Papers in the Library of Congress there are the following letters from James Creelman, Hearst's leading writer, which throw interesting light on Bryan's activities at the time:

"New York Journal

"W. R. HEARST

"PERSONAL

"May 24, 1900.

"My dear Bryan:

"As soon as Mr. Hearst got back I told him of your anxiety and the desire of the party leaders to have a new Democratic daily established in Chicago and I urged it upon him as strongly as I could. He said that he was tired out and not in the mood for a new effort. I pointed out the political glory and the party power and recognition which would result. He declared that no hope of money profits would induce him to throw himself into the abyss of toil again, but that if I could satisfy him that you and the party leaders needed the paper badly, that it was essential to success, that it would be pushed and helped and recognized as the mouthpiece of the party, he would consent. I at once went to Washington and saw Senator Jones from whom I received assurances that if Mr. Hearst would start a paper in Chicago, it would almost ensure your election by its fighting influence in the Middle West. Senator Jones said that Mr. Hearst would receive all the help the machinery

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of the party could give him and that he could receive any recognition he wanted either before or after election. I came back here, and, adding your pleas to that of Senator Jones, secured Mr. Hearst's consent. *The thing is to be done!*

"Second. I have written an editorial calling on the N. Y. State Convention to instruct its delegates for you. It is now awaiting Mr. Hearst's approval, which I have practically secured in advance. I have also cabled to England to get signed statements from English princes and noblemen thanking McKinley for his friendly attitude to Great Britain during the Boer War. These I will publish in contrast to American expressions of sympathy for the Boers.

"I cannot exaggerate the importance of winning the German vote. I hope that the next speech you make will contain a pointed and sweeping tribute to the Germans in America. I get evidence from everywhere—and especially from our German edition—that the Germans are swinging to us in masses.

"George Gray has written to me that he must wait for the platform before he speaks. He admires you, but will not support a too strong free silver declaration.

"The more I enquire the more I am convinced that the Kansas City Convention will make a simple reaffirmation of the Chicago platform and will not specifically mention '16 to 1,' unless the convention is put under the pressure of a threat from you that you will not be the candidate and I know you well enough to believe that you will leave the delegates free on that point, after having expressed your individual opinion.

"Give my regards to Mrs. Bryan and the little ones.

"Sincerely yours,

"JAMES CREELMAN."

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Mr. Hearst started the *Chicago American* and as a reward he was appointed president of the National Association of Democratic Clubs. This was Mr. Hearst's first direct entry into politics. The clubs, under Mr. Hearst's direction, attained a membership of 3,000,000 and were useful in the 1900 campaign. They were also useful to Mr. Hearst personally when, four years later, he decided that he would like to be the Democratic candidate for President himself.

James Creelman wrote to Bryan on June 2, 1900:

"Dear Bryan:

"We are hard at work for you here and things are moving well. Until a secretary is named for the National Association of Democratic Clubs I am in charge of the organization's work. . . . Mr. Hearst will give \$10,000 or \$15,000 to start our fund and I will raise that sum to \$30,000 or perhaps \$40,000 by a little plan—no, I won't tell you what it is! Mr. Hearst asked me to write that Fourth of July Proclamation for him and I am glad you liked it. We cannot, cannot, cannot and will not, will not, take up '16 to 1' in the East. You know that I am your sincere friend and that I do not intend to intrude too much advice on you; but I want to say that I have seen most of the leaders east, west, north and south and they are all opposed to any 'specific mention' of free silver in the platform and are eager to simply reaffirm the platform of 1896 in general terms and devote the new platform to the new issues. If they say anything else to you they lie; and if you force the convention to make '16 to 1' an explicit issue, reiterated in the platform, you will be simply forcing the delegates against their will. I say this in all candor and I believe that you already know it yourself. Nobody favors an abandon-

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ment of a line in the Chicago platform; it is simply a question of reaffirmation or reiteration or, as I should say, 're-irritation.' Mr. Hearst has asked me to be with him during his conferences with the leaders in Washington and New York and so I feel that I have a right to write freely as your friend and supporter. I have written editorials pressing for 'instructions' in our State Convention and have privately delivered ultimatums from Mr. Hearst. You may consider that fight over. The thing now is to carry New York. That means sure victory. I think that this State is close, with perhaps a slight preponderance in favor of Mr. McKinley. There are thousands of Democrats who did not support you in 1896 and a large body of Germans who are certain to support you now on a platform that simply reaffirms the Chicago platform, without specifically mentioning 16 to 1. This I know from actual detailed personal investigation. The editors and managers of our German edition say the same thing. If the Chicago platform is simply reaffirmed instantly this State will be Democratic. That is my judgment and you can take it for what it is worth.

"I may go out to see you before you start on your fishing trip. If I do I will take Mrs. Creelman with me for the sake of the journey.

"Give my kindest regards to Mrs. Bryan.

"Sincerely yours,"

"JAMES CREELMAN."

The Democratic convention met at Kansas City early in July, 1900. Bryan was unquestionably the nominee, and therefore the only uncertainty was whether he would succeed in winning his fight for a plank in the platform declaring for the free coinage of silver. Bryan sent a message

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to the convention which read: “If by any chance the Committee on Resolutions decides to report a platform in which there is not a silver plank there must be a minority report and a fight on the floor of the convention. I will come to Kansas City on the fastest train available, make a fight for silver on the floor of the convention, and then decline to take the nomination if the convention omits the ratio. This is final.” Finally, by a close vote in which the deciding vote was cast by the delegate from Hawaii at the earnest solicitation of the Bryan forces, a silver plank was included in the platform. Some men thought it would be nice to nominate Bryan on the Fourth of July, but the fight on the platform occupied too much time, and he was not nominated until July 5, when he was declared unanimously to be the candidate after his friend W. D. Oldham of Nebraska made a nominating speech.

The New York *Times* reported the ensuing demonstration: “From floor, from platform, from the great banks of seats sloping upward on every hand, from the hanging gardens packed up to the very steel girders under the roof there rose a roar made up of one word. That word was Bryan. . . . It was as though all the express trains in the world were tearing at once through the same tunnel.” The Lebanon, Indiana, Bryan Club entered the convention hall and opened red, white, and blue umbrellas, twirling them to the music as the members did a cakewalk. Poultney Bigelow reported this scene: “Utah sent a woman delegate, who appeared upon the platform and spoke inaudibly in favor of Mr. Bryan. She was loudly cheered, because she was a woman and had wavy hair. My chewing-gum neighbor said that the husband of the Utah woman was waiting for her outside with the baby. At any rate, here was a

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woman delegate, Cohen by name, for the first time in history ascending the platform of a National convention in support of a candidate for the Presidency.

"When Bryan was finally nominated, no one was surprised, but every one acted as though he had triumphed over an obstinate resistance, and consequently all went mad with apparent delight. Everybody walked 'ragtime,' the whole body of delegates moved in circles round and round singing and yelling and keeping step to what music they could hear. In the midst of it was the Utah delegate, Mrs. Cohen, flushed and excited; her hair, which resembles that of Mrs. Brown Potter, in imminent danger of being trodden on. She did not seem to feel the ground—she was afloat—she embodied the mad spirit of the movement—it was a cakewalk in heaven to her—a heaven of silver clouds.

"People pointed to her from the galleries. 'Look at the woman'; but she laughed and shouted and trotted along with the music, happy as a school child on a frolic.

"'What's the matter with the new woman?' shouted men in the galleries.

"'She's all right,' yelled Mrs. Cohen, in reply, and went on with the carmagnole. When she had danced and yelled herself tired she perched on the edge of the platform and remarked happily to a delegate, as she arranged her dress: 'My, but wasn't that hot stuff?' Then, while adjusting hairpins, she leaned over and called to a reporter:

"'Say, are you for Bryan?'

"'You bet!'

"'Shake!' And the bond was sealed.

"'Woman, lovely woman—when you appear on the floor of a Democratic convention your skirts become stained with more than merely tobacco juice.'

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While all this was going on, Bryan was lying on a lounge in the parlor of his home in Lincoln. His former law partner Talbot rushed in from the telegraph room and shouted, “You’re nominated, old man!” “Talbot,” remarked Bryan, “this is terribly sudden.”

For a time it was doubtful who would be the candidate for Vice-President. William Sulzer, later Governor of New York, was active in his own behalf, and he was awaiting the arrival of Richard Croker, his Tammany boss, to find out whether he might have his support. When Mr. Croker arrived in Kansas City, he said, “Bryan and Sulzer! Huh! How long before everybody would be saying ‘Brandy and Seltzer’?” Whereupon Mr. Sulzer’s boom collapsed. The convention nominated Adlai E. Stevenson, who had been Vice-President under President Cleveland.

The platform declared that imperialism growing out of the Spanish-American War was “the paramount issue of the campaign,” and in his many speeches Bryan spoke of it as constantly as he had spoken of free silver in 1896. “Dr. Taylor,” he said, “has aptly expressed it in his ‘Creed of the Flag,’ when he asks:

“‘Shall we turn to the old world again
With the penitent prodigal’s cry?’

I answer, never.” Bryan denied that it was the “manifest destiny” of the United States to become a colonial empire, and he maintained that such a policy would be profitable to the classes of society he hated at the expense of those he loved: “Imperialism would be profitable to the army contractors; it would be profitable to the shipowners, who would carry live soldiers to the Philippines and bring dead soldiers back; it would be profitable to those who would

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seize upon the franchises, and it would be profitable to the officials whose salaries would be fixed here and paid over there; but to the farmer, to the laboring man and to the vast majority of those engaged in other occupations it would bring expenditure without return and risk without reward."

And Bryan also went to his favorite book, the Bible, and in it he found no warrant for imperialism. "The command, 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature,' " he said, "has no Gatling gun attachment."

While Bryan was visiting various sections of the country with highly oratorical arguments in favor of the immediate independence of his little brown brothers in the Philippine Islands and denouncing the Republican party for withholding that independence, his slightly darker, but nevertheless brothers in the South were being daily and systematically deprived by the Democratic party of the independence guaranteed to them by the Constitution. However, Bryan was seldom so much interested in general principles as he was in specific campaign issues.

Bryan's oratorical triumphs were offset in the campaign of 1900 by the enthusiasm aroused by a new popular star, Theodore Roosevelt, whose energy proved as attractive as Bryan's melody. While McKinley remained in Washington, Roosevelt toured the country, and Senator Mark Hanna sent as his accompanists a large number of orators who spoke of the virtues in "the full dinner pail." In this campaign Mr. Roosevelt began that lifelong practice of calling everybody who did not agree with him on foreign policy weaklings and criminals. One of those who did not agree with him was Professor William James, who wrote to his friend Major Henry Lee Higginson:

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“Nauheim, Sept. 18, 1900.

“. . . I read your political observations with respect, and see how you are professionally bound to resist Bryan. But I pray for his victory none the less. There are worse things than financial troubles in a Nation's career. To puke up its ancient soul, and the only things that gave it eminence among other nations, in five minutes without a wink of squeamishness, is worse; and that is what the Republicans would commit us to in the Philippines. Our conduct there has been one protracted infamy towards the Islanders, and one protracted lie towards ourselves. If we can only regain our old seat in the American saddle, and get back into some sincere relations with our principles and professions, it seems to me it makes very little permanent difference what incidental disturbances may accompany the process, for this crisis is one which is sure to determine the whole moral development of our policy in a good or a bad way for an indefinite future time. . . .”

The result of the election was that Bryan was defeated by an even greater majority than in 1896. McKinley received a vote of 7,219,530 and Bryan 6,358,071. McKinley received 292 electoral votes and Bryan 155.

After the campaign Bryan told this story about himself: “I was the innocent cause of a Democratic barber in a small town in Colorado losing his job. It occurred soon after the close of the last campaign. I went to Colorado on a visit, and while there dropped into a barber shop to get shaved. When the tonsorial artist released me from his chair I asked him what his bill was, and he told me that he was so proud of having shaved a candidate for President that he would not charge me a cent. In order to return the compliment I induced him to accept a silver dollar for his service. I had

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scarcely got out of the town before the barbers' union held a special meeting and expelled my admirer. When he protested that he had not shaved free, but had accepted a silver dollar from my hands, the president of the union informed him that his protestation convicted him of violating one of the rules of the union, which was that five dollars was the regular fee for shaving dead men.”

II

In January, 1901, Bryan began publication of *The Commoner*, a weekly newspaper devoted to his views and interests. While Bryan's enemies and opponents were calling him the Boy Orator of the Platte, his friends had taken to referring to him as the Great Commoner, and sometimes, for variety, the Peerless Leader. Proud of the title of commoner, it was natural for Bryan to adopt it for his newspaper. The publicity value of his two campaigns for President was very great, and *The Commoner* started with an advance subscription of 17,000. Bryan was also deluged with manuscripts by his admirers. *The Commoner* was a perfect solution for Bryan's problem: he needed between Presidential campaigns—for he was not yet tired of running—a medium for the expression of his opinions and a means of keeping his name before his millions of admirers. *The Commoner* appeared every week, and its leading articles by the editor and owner himself were sent in advance to lists of country weeklies and city newspapers. The editorials denounced the Republican party because it refused to give independence to the Philippine Islands and because it believed in trusts and catered to them. Bryan also devoted his editorial talents to minor matters on occasion. In one of the issues of *The Commoner* the following editorial ap-

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peared, headed "Drifting Toward Royalty": "The appointment of special envoys to represent the United States government at the coronation of King Edward indicates a weakening of American sentiment and a lowering of American ideals. Surely, our Ambassador at the court of St. James can give expression to all the interest which Americans feel in the crowning of England's sovereign. Do the emperors of the old world send distinguished personages to dance attendance upon our president when he assumes the duties imposed upon him by the suffrages of his countrymen? Why, then, should American representatives hang around a throne and pay homage to one who rules, not by the voice of the people or because of personal merit, but because he is the oldest son of one who in turn inherited the privilege of exercising authority? It takes generations to cultivate the courtier's bow and the worshipful mien, and our envoys are apt to excite the derision that is expressed toward those who show the fawning spirit, but fawn awkwardly. King Edward ought to make the most of this evidence of the decadence of the American spirit, for the demonstration may not be repeated. He should announce that the proud heir of George III accepts with pleasure the respectful adoration of the repentant descendants of George Washington. . . ."

While continuing to defend his stand on free silver in *The Commoner* and while expressing his sympathy for the cause of the Boers, Bryan also found time to condemn the marriages of rich Americans to titled Europeans and to express his opinion of J. P. Morgan. In *The Commoner* Bryan deplored the assassination of his late rival, William McKinley, but he also found occasion to denounce the actions of his associates. "It was not an inspiring spec-

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tacle," Bryan wrote, "to see these debased representatives—or rather misrepresentatives—of the Republican party sucking political comfort out of the wounds of the chief executive."

The Commoner refused the advertisements of trust-made products, but some of the issues contained advertisements headed "Relieve Your Stomach" and others announcing the "only authorized, complete collection of Mr. Bryan's Speeches." Once every year Mr. Bryan, who was known as Will to his family, friends, and associates, took the entire force of *The Commoner* on a picnic. They ran races, climbed a greased pole, and played baseball. And on the anniversary of the founding of the paper there was a celebration at the home of the founder, with games, recitations, music, and refreshments. Bryan's brother, Charles W. Bryan, was the business manager of the newspaper.

Bryan also devoted a large part of his time to lecturing during those years when he was not running for President. Soon after the defeat of 1900 he began to devote himself to that activity which, next to his politics, was the leading activity of his life, and that was the promotion of his religion. In his *Memoirs* he wrote that after 1900 he had time free from politics to devote to religion, and he thought that by talking religion he might influence young men. "I had made a sufficient success in life," he wrote, "to answer any objection that might be made to my mental ability and I felt that I might make a defense of the Christian religion and reach some who might not be so easily reached from the pulpit." It was during this period that Bryan began that career as a Chautauqua lecturer which made him even more popular in the country. In these years he composed and delivered his two most popular lectures, "The Value of an

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Ideal” and “The Prince of Peace” in which he mixed politics and religion with an adroitness that was pleasing to his immense audiences. He stood on platforms under hot tents with a pitcher of ice water on one side of him and a cake of ice on the other. In his rich, powerful voice he gave the eager, fascinated listeners the benefit of his sentimentality, and while they were laughing at his frequent anecdotes, he managed to take a drink of water. He sometimes got in this drink by saying, “When I first began running for President,” and while the crowd giggled, he drank. It will be necessary to take up Bryan’s religious ideas in detail later, but at this point it is as well to give a sample of his rhetoric. In “The Prince of Peace,” which he repeated over and over again to enthusiastic audiences, there is this passage, which runs the death of Little Nell a close second for the booby prize of literature: “If the Father deigns to touch with divine power the cold and pulseless heart of the buried acorn and to make it burst forth from its prison walls, will he leave neglected in the earth the soul of man, made in the image of his Creator? If He stoops to give to the rosebush, whose withered blossoms float upon the autumn breeze, the sweet assurance of another springtime, will He refuse the words of hope to the sons of men when the frosts of winter come? If matter, mute and inanimate, though changed by the forces of nature into a multitude of forms, can never die, will the imperial spirit of man suffer annihilation when it has paid a brief visit like a royal guest to this tenement of clay? No, I am sure that He Who, notwithstanding His apparent prodigality, created nothing without a purpose, and wasted not a single atom in all His creation, has made provision for a future life in which

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man's universal longing for immortality will find its realization."

In his lecture on "The Making of a Man" Bryan burst without rhyme or reason into the following scansion: "The wind that first whispered its secret of strength to the flapping sail is now turning the wheel at the well." It is difficult to believe in Bryan's attraction when one reads his speeches, but it must be remembered that they were not composed to be read but were carefully orchestrated for his extraordinary voice.

Bryan received large sums of money for his lectures, but he would never speak for money on Sunday. Whenever he found it necessary to speak at Sunday Chautauqua lectures where admission was charged, he scrupulously avoided being paid for those lectures. He wished nothing to be entered in the record which could be used against him when he finally faced his maker.

Bryan built himself a house just outside Lincoln, which he called Fairview, where he did his editorial work when he was not lecturing. In the library there were oil paintings of Lincoln, Daniel Webster, and William Jennings Bryan. There were also pictures of Tolstoi, Thomas Jefferson, and Mrs. Bryan. A picture of the national capitol at Washington done in straw by an Italian admirer also hung here. Gifts sent to Bryan from all over the world by his missionary friends and political admirers were placed about the house. An extraordinary collection of hats from various countries occupied a place in one room. "Bryan loved to play with these quaint bits of headgear," one of his biographers tells us.

During this period Bryan was continually accused by newspapers which did not like his politics of being too

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wealthy. In 1903 a controversy over the will of Philo S. Bennett, one of Bryan's admirers, caused him some embarrassment. Mr. Philo S. Bennett, a wealthy merchant, of New Haven, Connecticut, wrote to Bryan after the election of 1896 expressing his admiration and the desire to aid him by a personal gift of \$3,000, which he felt Bryan would need if he was defeated. Bryan inquired whether Mr. Bennett was interested in any silver mines, and when he was told that he was not, Bryan accepted the gift. Mr. Bryan and Mr. Bennett met, and they liked each other. Whenever Mr. Bryan visited New York they met, and they corresponded with each other regularly. In the spring of 1900 Mr. Bennett visited Mr. Bryan at Lincoln, Nebraska. He brought with him a copy of his will, and he asked Mr. Bryan to help him to make another will, in which he wished to leave Mr. Bryan \$50,000. Bryan told Mr. Bennett that if he was elected President in 1900, he would not need money, and at Bryan's suggestion Mr. Bennett left the \$50,000 to Mrs. Bennett in trust for Mr. Bryan. It was also agreed that if Mr. Bryan did not need the money at the time of Mr. Bennett's death, he would distribute it to various educational institutions. Bryan's explanation of Mr. Bennett's generosity was that Mr. Bennett was intensely interested in the political ideas advocated by Bryan, and he wished to give him this sum of money so that Bryan might be in a position "to devote a larger part of his time to unremunerative labor of a public character." With his will Mr. Bennett left a letter to his wife explaining his desire to leave \$50,000 to Mr. Bryan. Mr. Bennett died in 1903. Mrs. Bennett and the other heirs objected to the bequest to Mr. Bryan and charged that Bryan had exercised undue influence. The court decided that Bryan had not influenced

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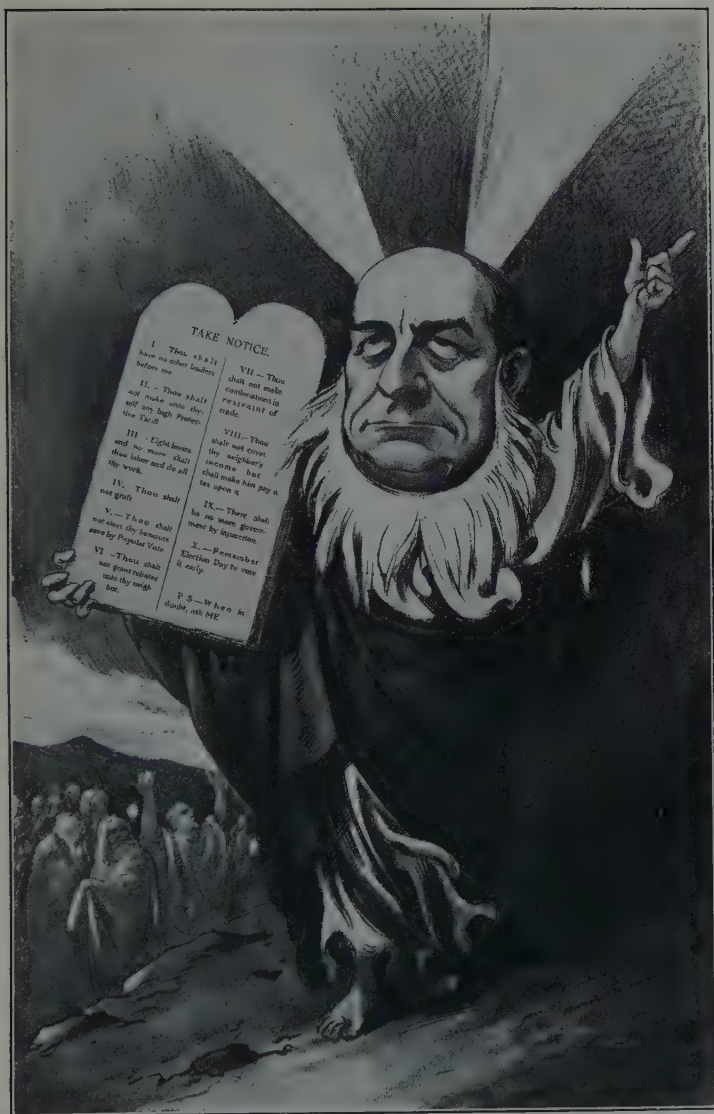
Mr. Bennett, but that the bequest was not legal because it had not been made a definite part of the will. The episode was unfortunate for Bryan, because it offered opportunity to those who were opposed to his ideas to hint that in his spare time between Presidential campaigns he was in the habit of robbing widows.

As the Presidential election of 1904 approached, it appeared inevitable that Theodore Roosevelt would be the candidate of the Republican party, and it seemed more than likely that William Jennings Bryan would not be the candidate of the Democratic party again. In the four years after the election of 1900 the eastern Democrats had succeeded somewhat in regaining control of the party and in breaking the influence which Bryan had exercised since 1896. Two defeats did not make him attractive as a candidate, and, besides, the big business interests were not so fond of Mr. Roosevelt as they had been of Mr. McKinley, whose assassination had foisted the turbulent Mr. Roosevelt upon them. These business interests decided that their pleasure would be served better with Alton B. Parker, a New York lawyer and judge, as President of the United States, and some of them turned from the Republican party to the Democratic party for that purpose. Bryan had fought vigorously in the pages of *The Commoner* against the influence of the gold Democrats of the East, but he had against him his two defeats and a vague but certain lethargy that came over the Democratic party in the face of the unquestionable national popularity of Theodore Roosevelt.

In the convention at St. Louis in 1904 Bryan supported Senator Cockrell, of Missouri, and also gave support to the nomination of William Randolph Hearst, who was the leading candidate next to Alton B. Parker. But the Demo-

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crats of the East were determined that Mr. Bryan would not have his way in this convention. In his speech nominating Alton B. Parker, Martin W. Littleton said: “No man here can have his exact way. No leader can take us along the narrow ledge of his unquestioned logic. No section should swerve us from the course that leads to union and fellowship. . . . No man is greater than his party and no party is greater than its principles. . . . There is no creed set down in black and white to which we are forever strapped, as to a corpse. There is no platform which can last forever, unless it be made of abstract things incapable of demonstration. (*Applause.*)” Bryan had fought hard to have the Democratic platform declare once more in favor of the dead issue of free silver. “It is better,” continued Mr. Littleton, “to give up some untimely doctrine and occasionally succeed, than to hold them all faithfully and always fail, for if we could become master of a few things, we might become ruler over many.” Bryan sat with the Nebraska delegation, his wide mouth shut tight and his face grim with bitter discouragement. The convention had refused to have anything to do with free silver, and for the first time in eight years his wishes were being disregarded. He was also struggling with a bad cold that threatened to turn to pneumonia. Senator E. W. Carmack, of Tennessee, seconding the nomination of Alton B. Parker, of New York—territory so hateful to Bryan—used Bryan’s own Bible against him, when he said: “When the Almighty wanted a leader to conduct the children of Israel out of the house of bondage Moses objected to his own selection on the ground that he lacked the gift of ready eloquence, and he suggested his brother Aaron as a fit leader of the people. But the Almighty preferred the silent wisdom of the great lawyer



“THE DEMOCRATIC MOSES AND HIS SELF-MADE
COMMANDMENTS”

(From *Puck*—1906.)

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to the voluble unwisdom of the great orator to lead the Democratic party in that campaign."

For the first time in years Democrats were beginning to sneer openly at Bryan, whose influence many of them no longer feared so much as they hated. But they still believed in conciliating him, for they needed his "ready eloquence." Senator Carmack added: "And He did not forget Aaron either. He found a place for him. And, Mr. Chairman, while the Democratic party prefers its Moses in this campaign (*Applause*), it wants the help of its Aaron too. (*Applause.*)" The New York *World* commenting in an editorial at this time on Bryan's position said: "No other American politician ever arose so quickly from obscurity to great prominence, dominated a great political party so absolutely for a time and then faded so quickly into semi-obscurity as Mr. Bryan. His career has been like nothing else so much as that of a pretending Mahdi, sweeping the motley followers of the Prophet into a vast army to harass civilization for a time, and then pass out of sight when the period of fanaticism has reached its climax and the emotional reaction set in."

Bryan made a speech to the convention of 1904, seconding the nomination of Senator Cockrell for President. He had been struggling for two nights with the platform committee, trying to persuade them to include free silver in the platform, and he had lost. "Two nights without sleep and a cold," he told the convention, "make it difficult for me to make myself heard. I trust that my voice will improve in a moment, but as I desire to speak to the delegates rather than to the galleries, I hope they at least will be able to hear."

"Eight years ago," said Bryan, "a Democratic national

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convention placed in my hand the standard of the party and commissioned me as its candidate. Four years later that commission was renewed. I come tonight to this Democratic national convention to return the commission. You may dispute whether I have fought a good fight, you may dispute whether I have finished my course, but you cannot deny that I have kept the faith.” This made a deep sentimental impression on the convention, and this speech was known thereafter as the “I Have Kept the Faith Speech.” Bryan went on to denounce Theodore Roosevelt for his militarism, and because he stood for plutocracy against democracy. He tried to prevent the nomination of Parker by telling the convention it had plenty of candidates who would be more pleasing to the entire country. But he was unsuccessful, and Parker was nominated.

The eastern Democrats had been making a fight to get the Democratic convention to declare in its platform in favor of a gold standard, and they had been fighting as hard as Bryan had been fighting for silver. It had finally been decided not to mention the currency question at all, since it was no longer an issue, but after he was nominated Alton B. Parker sent the following telegram to W. F. Sheehan: “I regard the gold standard as firmly and irrevocably established, and shall act accordingly if the action of the convention today shall be ratified by the people. As the platform is silent on the subject, my view should be made known to the convention, and if it is proved to be unsatisfactory to the majority, I request you to decline the nomination for me at once, so that another may be nominated before adjournment.”

Rumors that a telegram from the nominee had been received flew about the convention, and there was great ex-

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citement. Bryan was in bed in his hotel nursing his cold. The telegram was finally read to the convention. Bryan appeared to denounce Parker, and there was an uproar in the convention as the delegates argued about what they should do concerning this unusual action by the candidate. Finally, in spite of vigorous protests from Bryan's followers, it was decided to ignore it and to inform the candidate that as the platform did not discuss the currency question, his view of it did not prevent him from accepting the nomination. Bryan's beloved free silver issue was thus laid to rest for all time.

Bryan accepted defeat and remained in the party; he was too canny a politician to bolt, for he knew how difficult it is for a man to return to a party as its candidate once he has left it, and he was already looking forward to 1908. In this campaign of 1904 it was Bryan who was a Democrat still, but very still. After Parker's nomination he declared in *The Commoner* that he supported the ticket, but he added: "As soon as the election is over I shall, with the help of those who believe as I do, undertake to organize for the campaign of 1908, the object being to marshal the friends of popular government within the Democratic party to the support of a radical and progressive policy to make the Democratic party an efficient means in the hands of the people for securing relief from the plutocratic element that controls the Republican party and for the time being is in control of the Democratic party." Meanwhile, Mr. Bryan took a trip around the world.

III

Mr. and Mrs. Bryan started around the world in September, 1905. In the accounts of his travels which Bryan

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sent back to be widely syndicated in American newspapers, he reached the height of the commonplace. Bryan met and talked with Premier Balfour, President Loubet of France, President Adolphe Deucher of Switzerland, the Tsar of Russia, Tolstoy, the Pope Pius X, Cardinal Merry del Val, but his talks were not productive of any interesting comment in his articles, which are slightly duller than his other writings, with the possible exception of some editorials in *The Commoner* and most of his religious essays. In a final article headed “Notes on Europe” he gave his millions of readers the reflections he had not had space for in his other articles. He noted, for instance, that English railway cars were colder than American, that sheep graze in the very suburbs of London and that these sheep make the best mutton chops in the world, that the wig is still worn by English judges, barristers, and solicitors, that “while the English are not given to the telling of stories as much as the Americans are, it must not be inferred that they are deficient in a sense of humor,” that “Westminster Abbey is one of the places which the visitor cannot well neglect,” and that “upon the streets of London, and in fact throughout the British Isles, the rule is to ‘turn to the left.’” He also discovered that “the French are more gregarious than the English,” that the rivers of Europe “immortalized in poetry and song” are “a little disappointing,” and that the driving-horses of St. Petersburg were the best in Europe.

Bryan sailed from San Francisco and arrived first in Honolulu, where he was received with hearty platitudes and the hope that he would be able to take back to the mainland some idea of the problems of Hawaii. In Japan he was treated with great respect and consideration, and there was an extended exchange of platitudes concerning

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the position of Japan in the universe, for Japan had just then finished establishing that position by naval and land battles against the Russians. Bryan attended the great reception to Admiral Togo, who had just returned from the war. “This was the occasion,” wrote Mrs. Bryan, “of Mr. Bryan’s much-discussed toast which he drank to Admiral Togo. Every one at the banquet table drank the toast in champagne, while Mr. Bryan, teetotaler as he was, used water. Some one said: ‘You should drink to the Admiral in champagne. Why do you use water?’ To which Mr. Bryan replied: ‘Admiral Togo won his great victory on water, so I drink to him in water. When he wins a great victory on champagne, then I will drink to him in champagne.’ This pleased the Japanese people very much.” The Japanese people, being at the moment in a victorious mood, were not difficult to please.

Bryan spent a day with the father of Yamashita, the Japanese boy he had educated in Nebraska. Mr. Yamashita lived in the country fifteen miles from Kagoshima. The school children of the town were lined up to welcome Bryan. “As young Yamashita and I rode between the lines,” he wrote, “they waved their flags and shouted ‘Banzai.’ And so it was at other schools. Older people may be diplomatic and feign good will, but children speak from their hearts. There is no mistaking their meaning, and in my memory the echo of the voices of the children, mingling with the assurances of the men and women, convinces me that Japan entertains nothing but good will toward our nation.” Incredible as it seems, Mr. Bryan really believed what he said. As we shall see when we come to his career as Secretary of State, Bryan believed that so long as he could treat the world to one big, benevolent smile, the affairs of the world

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would right themselves. Evidently he forgot that children sometimes grow up into diplomatic older people, and that little flags, and not world affairs, are put into the hands of school children.

In the Philippines Bryan was hailed by the natives as their savior, who believed in independence, and he pleased the American newspaper, the *Manila Times*, when in a speech he urged the Filipinos to take advantage of the benevolent opportunities of preparing themselves for the independence which was eventually to come to them by sampling the educational facilities established by their American conquerors. A popular banquet was held in Bryan's honor. Bryan spoke, and the *Manila Times* wrote next day: "In his own speech he took occasion to say that he did not feel at liberty to speak freely, as he would in the United States. Two or three times when his remarks were leading to a climax whose logical sequel appeared to be some reference to independence, his audience waited almost breathlessly; but he carefully evaded the seemingly logical dénouement and ended in some relevant but not thrilling expression. One could sense rather than hear the sigh, in some cases of relief, in others of disappointment, which followed." Those who were ruling the Philippines were afraid that Bryan, representing the Democratic party, which had declared in favor of their immediate independence in 1900, would upset their plans by advocating Philippine independence in the Philippines, as he had so frequently and so passionately in the United States. The Filipinos were hoping that he would thus aid their cause. But neither group knew Mr. Bryan. "His address dwelt chiefly on two subjects," reported the *Manila Times*, with relief, "the first being that there is a tie which binds all

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mankind together, that tie being knit up with the human heart, and the second being what constitutes civilization and how it may be attained."

Then Bryan went on to India, where he delivered his favorite speech, "The Prince of Peace," before a large audience in the town hall of Bombay. As he stood watching the imposing Himalayas Bryan's heart was filled with the following sentiments, which he sent back to his syndicate: "While all about us was yet in darkness, the snowy robe which clothes the upper 12,000 feet of the range caught a tint of pearl from the first rays of the sun, and, as we watched, the orb of day, rising like a ruby globe from a lake-blue mist, gilded peak after peak until at last we saw Mount Everest, earth's loftiest point, one hundred and twenty miles away and nearly a thousand feet higher than Kinchinjunga. We saw the shadows fleeing from the light like hunted culprits and hiding in deep ravines, and we marked the triumph of the dawn as it swept down the valleys.

"How puny seem the works of man when brought into comparison with majestic nature! His groves, what pigmies when measured against the virgin forest! His noblest temples, how insignificant when contrasted with the masonry of the hills! What canvas can imitate the dawn and sunset! What inlaid work can match the mosaics of the mountains!"

It was the Holy Land, however, which interested Bryan most, for here he could visit with his own feet the places once inhabited by the heroes of the Bible, the men he admired more than any on earth. In his book called *Christ and His Companions* Bryan wrote: "When Mrs. Bryan and I visited the Holy Land some years ago we went by boat

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from Tiberias to the site of Capernaum. On the way we were twice compelled to lower the sails because of sudden gusts of wind, like those described in the New Testament. We anchored near where Capernaum once stood, and ate our lunch on the seashore. Our son had caught a few fish, and I had purchased from a shepherd a lamb—one of the long-tail breed which Rawlinson describes in his *Ancient History*. These, with the bread we carried with us, furnished food for our party. Then I gathered a quantity of pebbles to give out as souvenirs of our visit to this historic spot.”

As he stood by the waters of the River Jordan, Bryan for a fraction of a moment sympathized with Naaman when he became exceeding wroth at the suggestion of Elisha that he bathe in those waters. The near-by streams of Abana and Pharpar seemed more inviting to Bryan, as they had to Naaman. But then Bryan remembered, he tells us, “God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.”

Bryan arrived in London on the third of July, 1906, and the following day he delivered a Fourth of July speech which was applauded enthusiastically and quoted widely. In it there appeared this passage: “As we are gathered tonight in England’s capital, permit me to conclude with a sentiment suggested by a piece of statuary which stands in Windsor Castle. It represents the late lamented Queen Victoria leaning upon her royal consort; he has one arm about her, and with the other hand is pointing upward. The sculptor has told in marble an eloquent story of strength coupled with tenderness, of love rewarded with trust, of sorrow brightened by hope, and he has told the story so plainly that it was scarcely necessary to chisel the words: ‘Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.’ It was a beautiful conception—more beautiful than that

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which gave to the world the Greek Slave, the Dying Gladiator, or the Goddess Athena, and it embodies an idea which, with the expanding feeling of comradeship, can be applied to the association of nations, as well as to the relations that exist between husband and wife. Let us indulge the hope that our nation may so measure up to its great opportunities, and so bear its share of the White Man's Burden, as to earn the right to symbolize its progress by a similar figure."

While he was in Norway, Bryan had received an invitation to attend the Inter-Parliamentary Union which was meeting in London to discuss ways and means of world peace. Bryan presented a plan he had already advocated in *The Commoner* and before the Bankers' Club of Tokio for applying the same machinery of arbitration of labor disputes to international affairs. Bryan made a speech before the Inter-Parliamentary Union in the course of which he told the assembled diplomats that "man excited is a very different animal from a man calm," and that "when men are mad they swagger around and tell what they can do; when they are calm they consider what they ought to do." Then he repeated what he had so often told audiences in the United States, the statement of the sage Thomas Jefferson that if he had to choose between a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, he would choose the newspapers. He advocated a period of discussion before a declaration of war. The diplomats listened with respectful approval.

When Bryan returned from his world tour in the autumn of 1906, he was greeted in New York with great enthusiasm by Democrats and Nebraskans, who had traveled specially to New York to meet him. It was arranged that he should

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speak in Madison Square Garden before he left for his home in the West. After the nomination of Parker, Bryan had come out for more radical reforms. In the columns of *The Commoner* he advocated government ownership of railways and municipal ownership of municipal franchises. He also advocated in his newspaper government ownership and operation of the telegraph. He had continued to write in favor of an income tax and direct popular election of Senators, and he also declared that he believed Federal judges should be elected by the people for short terms instead of appointed for life.

During the years of Roosevelt's two administrations, the development of trusts had gone on more rapidly than ever before, and with it came abuses and protests. Mr. Rockefeller had already made his famous statement on trusts: "The American Beauty rose can be produced in its splendor and fragrance only by sacrificing the early buds which grew up around it." In his speech in Madison Square Garden Bryan seized upon this illustration, and declared that the Democratic party "champions the cause of the ninety-nine enterprises which are menaced." He repeated his remedy of a Federal license for all large corporations and urged the government to forbid offending monopolies the use of the mails, railroads, telegraphs, and the right to inter-State commerce. He advocated that the government refuse a license to any corporation controlling more than a fixed proportion of the total product of its industry, so that free competition might be preserved. This was enough to startle big business, but he went even further and said, "I have already reached the conclusion that railroads partake so much of the nature of a monopoly that they must ultimately become public property and be managed by public officials in the interest of the whole community in accord-



Photo by Brown Brothers.

THE MAN FROM NEBRASKA RETURNS FROM EUROPE

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ance with the well-defined theory that public ownership is necessary where competition is impossible.” This sounded like rank socialism to many of his hearers, and it became perfectly clear that the issue of the next campaign would be plutocracy against democracy, trusts against competition, and that Bryan would be the leader of the Democrats and small business interests. Exercising all his oratorical powers, Bryan ended his Madison Square Garden speech before 10,000 eager listeners with this peroration: “Plutocracy is abhorrent to a republic; it is more despotic than monarchy, more heartless than aristocracy, more selfish than bureaucracy. It preys upon the nation in time of peace and conspires against it in the hour of its calamity. Conscienceless, compassionless and devoid of wisdom, it enervates its votaries while it impoverishes its victims. It is already sapping the strength of the nation, vulgarizing social life and making a mockery of morals. The time is ripe for the overthrow of this giant wrong. In the name of the counting-rooms which it has defiled; in the name of business honor which it has polluted; in the name of the home which it has despoiled; in the name of religion which it has disgraced; in the name of the people whom it has oppressed, let us make our appeal to the awakened conscience of the nation.

“And if I may be permitted to suggest a battle hymn, I propose a stanza slightly changed from one of the most touching of the poems of Burns, Scotland’s democratic bard:

“Columbia! My dear, my native soil,
For whom my warmest wish to heaven is sent,
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content.

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And, oh, may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile;
Then, though unearned wealth to wickedness be lent,
A virtuous populace will rise and stand
A wall of fire around their much-loved land.’”

Mr. Bryan enjoyed this battle hymn so much that he saved it up and used it again many years later at Dayton, Tennessee.

Now that he was back in the United States Bryan came out boldly again for Philippine independence, and he also had a few criticisms to make of British rule in India, though he had only seen fit to give the Indians his “Prince of Peace” speech. He told a dinner of newspaper men in New York that the United States “is the greatest nation in the world,” and that there was no doubt about it. He also remarked that he had ridden eight hundred miles in China “and never saw a single newspaper during the entire journey.” This he thought regrettable. He urged the newspaper men never to write anything they did not believe, and he declared that he was not against wealth as such. On his way home Bryan stopped at Chicago and delivered two speeches against the trusts. It was generally recognized that Bryan would probably be the candidate for President again in 1908.

When he arrived in Nebraska, Bryan was welcomed with great demonstrations. Trainloads of admirers came specially to Lincoln to see their “Peerless Leader,” and he was met at the station by the Governor of the State, the Mayor of Lincoln, six bands, and a mounted escort of policemen. Later in the day 35,000 persons listened to him speak in the State capitol grounds. Bryan thanked his admirers and

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described his travels. Then he shook hands with thousands who passed in line before him, and there was a grand display of fireworks. Mr. A. L. Bixby wrote a piece for the occasion called “You Are Welcome, Mr. Bryan,” of which the following is a part:

“What a journey you have taken, everybody understands,
And what facts you have recorded in this trip through
foreign lands.

You have watched the Jap man toiling and the little ones
at play,

You have seen the Brahmin worship in his own peculiar
way;

You have been where Aaron traveled, you have trod the
selfsame track—

You are welcome, Mr. Bryan; we are glad to see you
back.”

When he finally got to his home at Normal, near Lincoln, Bryan was welcomed again by his immediate neighbors. He told them: “We have visited the temples of the Orient. We have stood in the most magnificent cathedrals of Europe, my wife and I, but after all, we’d rather be here in this little white church at Normal.” Then he distributed to each member of the congregation a pebble from the Sea of Galilee.

Soon after he arrived home, Bryan left for a political speech-making tour of the South, and during 1907 he made political speeches throughout the Far West. He had not yet admitted that he was a candidate, but he was practicing the method he found so effective before of making his own nomination inevitable. This was made easier for him by the fact that the Democrats had been defeated very badly

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in 1904 when they had not nominated Bryan, and the party was therefore once more out of the control of the eastern managers and in the hands of Bryan and his followers. The Democrats once more found themselves without anybody of national publicity value except Bryan, who devoted all his time to enhancing that value by speeches and writing. A few men were beginning to talk of Woodrow Wilson, President of Princeton, as a possible candidate for President of the United States in 1908, and Colonel Harvey had publicly advocated Wilson's nomination at a dinner in the Lotos Club on February 3, 1906. There were some Democrats who thought that Bryan should step aside, and they contemplated visiting him and asking that he do so, but the strength of his followers was too great. Many men openly proclaimed that they would rather go down to defeat with Bryan than win with any other man. After his return from Europe, he had a way of arriving in a State just as the politicians were planning to elect to the next national convention delegates who were antagonistic to him. His personal influence and oratorical powers usually defeated his opponents. He branded all those who disagreed with him as “tools of the interests” and “Wall Street men.” If a Democratic candidate for the Senate or the House of Representatives opposed Bryan in his speeches, he soon found that another candidate, who spoke in favor of Bryan, appeared in his district, and the opponent was forced to become an admirer, if he wished to preserve his political life.

Many Democrats were opposed to Bryan's stand on government ownership of railroads, and he himself did not wish to have that proposition included in the platform, but he insisted on his right to talk about this reform and others, including the initiative and referendum. Arthur Wallace

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Dunn reported the following conversation he listened to between Bryan and a group of Southern Democrats in 1907: " 'You people also complain because I have declared for the initiative and referendum. That ought to be an issue,' asserted Bryan. 'I will drive every man out of the Democratic party who does not support it.'

" 'Mr. Bryan,' almost wailed ex-Senator Berry of Arkansas, 'I want to live long enough to see another Democratic President, but I am afraid you are making it impossible. Why can't you leave these impossible issues and stick to those upon which you can win?'

" 'Win! Win!' exclaimed Bryan. 'That's it! You want to win! You would sacrifice principle for success. I would not. I would not desire to be elected if the principles I stand for were not incorporated in the platform. I am not sure that defeat is not better than victory, if victory comes with the sacrifice of principles. What an empty thing victory would have been in 1904 when so many of the principles of the party had been sacrificed. I intend, if I am the candidate, that the principles shall be preserved.'

" 'But some of the things you have stood for in the past have proved to be wrong,' said Senator Daniel, 'and you may be wrong again.'

" 'I have always been right,' asserted Bryan."

Bryan permitted the discussion as to whether he would be a candidate to continue until November, 1907, when he announced that he would make no effort to obtain the nomination, but that if the party wanted him, he would submit. Having made it absolutely impossible for the party to want anybody else, he bowed his head to the will of the people with unctuous humility.

The Democratic Convention of 1908 was held in Denver,

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and on the way to the convention most of the leaders stopped off at Fairview to visit Bryan. Bryan controlled the convention completely, and he was able to dictate the platform and his own candidacy and to pick John W. Kern as Vice-Presidential candidate. When the blind Senator from Oklahoma, Gore, mentioned Bryan's name in the convention, the delegates cheered for an hour and twenty-seven minutes. Wild yells filled the hall; men without coats or collars stood on chairs and shrieked. A grand march started, but was halted for a moment because one of the delegates yelled so vigorously that his false teeth flew out and rolled under the press stand. He recovered them and his place in line and yelled some more. The band played "Dixie" and one Bryan enthusiast got it to play "Tammany" in the hope that the New York delegation would thereupon join the parade. But the delegates from New York remained seated and silent, their usual attitude in the face of an inevitable Bryan nomination. When one Bryan enthusiast tried to grab the New York standard and carry it in the procession, Charley White, an ex-prizefighter, sent him sprawling to the floor with a blow on the jaw. Cowboys and cowgirls, with red bandanas round their necks, carried pictures of Bryan and shrieked for him. The next night, July 9, Bryan was nominated, and there was another demonstration, to which he listened over the telephone.

During the campaign Bryan spent most of his oratorical energy denouncing the trusts. He also said, apropos of the fact that his opponent, William Howard Taft, was a Unitarian, that the American people would never elect a man President who disbelieved in the virgin birth and the divinity of Jesus. But when the votes were counted it was

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discovered that the American people had given Mr. Taft 1,269,804 more votes than Mr. Bryan, and he received 321 electoral votes to 162 for Bryan.

After his defeat in 1908 Bryan told his friends the parable of a drunken man who tried to force his way into a club. The first time he was gently pushed down the steps by the doorman. He tried again, got inside the door, and was thrown out. With inexhaustible patience he made a third attempt, when he was thrown violently down the stairs. As he got up and brushed off his clothes, he said, “I am on to those people. They don’t want me in there.” After the election Bryan resumed his editorial work and his lecturing. He announced that he sincerely hoped that it would never become necessary for him to become a candidate for office again. It never was.

CHAPTER V

A SILVER-TONGUED SPHINX

BETWEEN 1908 and 1912 the politics of the nation had undergone a change which Bryan had already foreseen many years before. Ever since the defeat of Bryan by McKinley in 1896 the Republican party had been "standing pat." Corporation finance had become an important development in the life of the country, and men realized that the trust had come to stay when J. P. Morgan formed the huge combination in the steel industry known as the United States Steel Corporation. Some men believed that such monopolistic combinations in industry were the best thing for the economic life of the country, and all of these men supported the Republican party. But the farmer and the small merchant were hurt by combinations in industry and railroads more than they were benefited, and it was their discontent which formed a powerful force in the Democratic party. Theodore Roosevelt, when he succeeded William McKinley, frightened the industrial captains by his talk of progressive reform and did not succeed in allaying the growing discontent by any appreciable remedies. His friend Mr. Taft had been trying to "stand pat" as he felt he ought to do, and at the same time ward off the blows of the ambitious Mr. Roosevelt. In this situation Bryan realized that there was great opportunity for his ideas and his ambitions, and, as we have seen, he advocated more and more radical reforms in his speeches and in *The Commoner*.

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All of Mr. Bryan's efforts, however, would have been of little avail, probably, if Mr. Roosevelt, with that impetuosity that was characteristic of him, had not decided that he was the savior of the nation, and that if the Republican party would not consent to be the vehicle of his benevolence, he would have to form a new party of his own.

In June, 1912, Bryan attended the Republican National Convention in Chicago as a newspaper reporter for a newspaper syndicate. He watched with great interest the wild scenes of that convention, when Roosevelt and his admirers left the Republican party and formed their new Progressive party. Bryan wrote to his newspapers that he had made the mistake of "not associating with me a sporting editor, who could give me the technical phrases of the prize ring; my vocabulary is hardly adequate for a description of the great contest which is being fought out at the Coliseum." Bryan also pointed out what he had maintained so often before, that Roosevelt was stealing Mr. Bryan's progressive principles and using them for his own political purposes, for Mr. Roosevelt had realized during the few years before 1912 that large numbers of persons throughout the country were intensely interested in certain progressive reforms, a realization which had come to Mr. Bryan many years before. Bryan looked down with glee on Roosevelt's disruptive actions, for there was thereby created an opportunity for the success of the Democratic party which it had not enjoyed within the memory of man.

Some men have maintained that Bryan wanted the Democratic nomination for President in 1912 and did everything in his power to obtain it by crafty means. It is more than likely that this is the truth, and it is also very natural that it should be so. Never had the Democrats had such an

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opportunity for success during his period of leadership. He had led them to defeat three times against great odds, and it was at least excusable for him to wish for the chance for victory now that it was easier. That he acted cannily and manipulated carefully toward this end is also more than likely, for that is the way to act in politics, and it was one of the characteristics of Mr. Bryan's practical mind that he reserved his native innocence for more abstract subjects and devoted all his native cunning to the business of politics.

Early in 1912 Senator R. F. Pettigrew, of South Dakota, spent an entire day in conference with Bryan and George Fred Williams at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York. "Bryan was very anxious to know," Pettigrew wrote, "what we were going to do in the Democratic Convention of that year. He was desirous that we should secure uninstructed delegates from our States and cast our votes for him. I told Bryan that we had supported him three times for President; that we did not think it wise for him to be a candidate that year, and that we would not support him, but that we would undertake to carry our States, as well as the State of Nebraska, for Champ Clark of Missouri, who was really a progressive Democrat. Bryan immediately attacked Clark, and stated that Clark was addicted to the excessive use of alcohol. I told him that while Clark did use alcohol and might at times have taken too much of it, that he was a far more temperate man than Bryan himself. Bryan thereupon indignantly resented my statement. Then I told him that it was my observation that very many more men were killed by over-eating than by over-drinking, and explained to him the physiological reasons for my statement. I said also, 'Mr. Bryan, you are exceedingly intemperate. You eat immoderately, and when you get a little older you will suffer

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serious consequences from your intemperate habits in this respect.' Of course this made Bryan very angry."¹

While Bryan was riding on the train from Chicago to Baltimore in June, 1912, he was thinking a great deal. He had just attended the disorderly Republican convention, and he was about to take an active part in the Democratic convention, where there were so many candidates of great strength that no man could predict what would happen. Mrs. Bryan has written in the *Memoirs* which she finished after Mr. Bryan's death that she had urged her husband to seek the nomination. "I wanted him to take the nomination," she wrote. "I wanted him to be President; I wanted him to conquer his enemies. We had worked so long and so hard. But he said: 'This may be the year for a Democrat to win. The other boys have been making their plans. I would not step in now.' And he went to Baltimore with only the future of 'the other boys' in his mind." But what if the strength of "the other boys" was divided, and no one could agree on an acceptable compromise? Would it not then be only the duty of Mr. Bryan to step in and help the convention out of a difficulty by consenting once more to be the standard bearer of his party and the leader of his nation? And, as we shall see, some men have implied that Mr. Bryan was not innocent of the temptation to bring about such a deadlock that would make his own nomination inevitable.

Before the 1912 convention met at Baltimore, various

¹ James Kerney, *The Political Education of Woodrow Wilson*, footnote, p. 286. Senator Pettigrew was right about Bryan's intemperance and about the subsequent results of it, for among the Bryan Papers in the Library of Congress are urine analyses and letters from a physical laboratory indicating that it was necessary for Mr. Bryan to go on a strict diet in his last years, and the letters also indicate that Mr. Bryan was very impatient under the restraint.

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leading candidates and their managers had made an effort to discover in which direction and toward which candidate Bryan's immense influence would be thrown. But the Great Commoner was one of the most secretive politicians who have ever played the game in America, and no one knew what was in his mind or what he intended to do. The Democratic candidate who had the support of most delegates was Champ Clark, of Missouri, Speaker of the House of Representatives. Bryan and Clark had known each other since they both were members of Congress in 1893. In 1911, recognizing that Champ Clark was the leading Democratic candidate, Mr. Bryan had invited him to attend the Bryan birthday dinner at Lincoln, Nebraska. Mr. Clark attended and spoke to an enthusiastic audience on "The Overthrow of Cannonism," a subject in which both Mr. Bryan and Mr. Clark were personally interested. But at this time Mr. Bryan also mentioned to politicians and friends that the Governor of New Jersey, Woodrow Wilson, was making speeches that sounded mighty progressive, and Bryan kept insisting all through the year 1912 that this Democratic convention must nominate a progressive candidate who would not be dictated to by Wall Street manipulators. Bryan was a candidate for delegate-at-large from Nebraska, and he made the public statement that if the delegation were instructed to vote for Judge Harmon, another leading candidate, Bryan would not consent to be a member of that delegation, because he believed Judge Harmon to be the candidate of the Wall Street interests. He expressed himself as willing to support either Mr. Clark or Governor Wilson.

Many attempts had been made during 1911 and 1912 to interest Mr. Bryan in Woodrow Wilson. The endeavor was

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a delicate task, for Mr. Wilson had been outspoken in his opinion of Mr. Bryan when it had never entered the dreams of the professor that he would be President. In an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* which Professor Wilson wrote in July, 1897, after Bryan's first campaign, he made this statement: "We might have had Mr. Bryan for President, because of the impression which may be made upon an excited assembly by a good voice and a few ringing sentences flung forth just after a cold man, who gave unpalatable counsel, had sat down. The country knew absolutely nothing about Mr. Bryan before his nomination and it would not have known anything about him afterward had he not chosen to make speeches." The fact that this judgment by Dr. Wilson had elements of truth did not make it any the more palatable for Mr. Bryan. Then in 1908 Woodrow Wilson refused to sit on the same platform with Mr. Bryan at a political meeting in New Jersey, and in March of that year he made a speech at Hamilton, Bermuda, in which he said: "I have even wished at times that every fool could be also a knave instead of being, as they often are, people who possess attractive manners and excellent intentions. Take Mr. Bryan for example. He is the most charming and lovable of men personally, but foolish and dangerous in his theoretical beliefs."

Mrs. Woodrow Wilson was responsible for the first meeting between her husband and Mr. Bryan, and, according to Colonel House, it was Mrs. Bryan who was responsible for Mr. Bryan's eventual interest in Woodrow Wilson. Mr. Wilson was in Georgia delivering an address in March, 1911, when Mrs. Wilson heard that the Rev. Dr. Charles R. Erdman, later Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, was bringing Mr. Bryan to Princeton to speak. Both

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Tumulty, Wilson's secretary, and Harry E. Alexander, editor of the Trenton *True American*, had impressed upon Mrs. Wilson the importance of Mr. Bryan's support if Mr. Wilson were to be President. Mrs. Wilson discovered by studying timetables that her husband could arrive back home in time to meet Mr. Bryan, and she sent him a telegram urging him to return at once for that purpose. It was arranged that Governor and Mrs. Wilson should dine at the Princeton Inn with Mr. Bryan, Dr. and Mrs. Erdman, and Thomas R. Birch, later Minister to Portugal, and a strong supporter of Mr. Bryan's in 1896.

At dinner Bryan was cordial, cautious, and noncommittal. Mr. Birch invited both Governor Wilson and Mr. Bryan to speak at a Democratic rally at Burlington on April 5, 1911. At this enthusiastic meeting of members of the party Woodrow Wilson said: "Mr. Bryan has borne the heat and burden of a long day; we have come in at a very much later time to reap the reward of the things that he has done. Mr. Bryan has shown that stout heart which, in spite of the long years of repeated disappointments, has always followed the star of hope, and it is because he has cried, 'America, awake!' that some other men have been able to translate into action the doctrines that he has so diligently preached." Mr. Bryan was pleased as Punch, for this was exactly what Mr. Bryan believed himself. And Mr. Wilson's statement happened to contain elements of truth as well as suavity. But Mr. Bryan was not to be taken in entirely by flattery, and though he liked Mr. Wilson thereafter, he was by no means sure that he wanted to make him President of the United States.

Meanwhile, Mr. Wilson's quiet, refined, and energetic supporter, Colonel House, realized more than anybody,

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perhaps, the importance of Mr. Bryan, for he took particular pains to conciliate and persuade the Great Commoner. And in this endeavor he did not ignore the importance of Mrs. Bryan. We have already seen that Colonel House and the Bryan family had spent some time together as neighbors in Texas during the winter of 1898 and 1899, and we have also seen that at that time Colonel House did not think much of Mr. Bryan's political opinions, but Colonel House realized the practical importance of those opinions. On November 18, 1911, Colonel House wrote to Governor Wilson: "I have been with Mr. Bryan a good part of the morning, and I am pleased to tell you that I think you will have his support. The fact that you did not vote for him in '96 was on his mind but I offered an explanation which seemed to be satisfactory. My main effort was in alienating him from Champ Clark and I believe I was successful there. He sent you several messages which he asked me to deliver to you in person which I shall be glad to do sometime when you are in New York provided you return before I go south around December first."

At about this time, November, 1911, Mr. Bryan made a trip to Jamaica on board the Hamburg-American liner *Prince Joachim*, which ran on a reef and was wrecked, apropos of which the New York *Sun* remarked nastily, "It is Colonel Bryan's first shipwreck of a nautical sort." Colonel House made this note in his diary: "Before I left for Texas, in December, 1911, it was understood that I should nurse Bryan and bring him around to our way of thinking, if possible. Before Mr. Bryan left New York for Jamaica, he asked me to keep him informed concerning political conditions and to send him such clippings as I thought would be of interest. He said he was taking but

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few papers: the *World*, the *Washington Post*, I think he mentioned, because I wondered why he took either of them, since they were both so antagonistic to him. However, his request gave me an opportunity to send him such clippings as I thought would influence him most in our direction." Then Colonel House wrote Mr. Bryan a very clever letter to Kingston, Jamaica:

"New York, December 6, 1911.

"Dear Mr. Bryan:

". . . I was called over the telephone last week by a friend of Mr. Hearst, who made an appointment to see me. He said that Mr. Hearst had been out to his country place on Sunday and they had talked about enlisting me in his behalf for the presidential nomination.

"I told him that I was thoroughly committed to Governor Wilson and that, even if I were not, I would advise Mr. Hearst to submerge himself for a while and work within the party for a season. After further conversation it developed that he was grooming himself for a dark horse.

"I do not know what effect my talk had, but as yet he has made no formal announcement.

"I learned, too, that he was favorable to Underwood or Champ Clark and was against Governor Wilson.

"I took lunch with Colonel Harvey yesterday. It is the first time I have met him. I wanted to determine what his real attitude was towards Governor Wilson, but I think I left as much in the dark as ever.

"He told me that everybody south of Canal Street was in a frenzy against Governor Wilson and said they were bringing all sorts of pressure upon him to oppose him. He said he told them he had an open mind, and that if they

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could convince him he was a dangerous man he would do so.

"He said that Morgan was particularly virulent in his opposition to Governor Wilson. I asked him what this was based upon, and he said upon some remark Governor Wilson had made in Morgan's presence concerning the methods of bankers and which Morgan took as a personal reference.

"He told me that he believed that any amount of money that was needed to defeat Governor Wilson could be readily obtained. He said he would be surprised if they did not put \$250,000 in New Jersey alone in order to defeat delegates favorable to his nomination.

"We are going to try to devise some plan by which we can use this Wall Street opposition to Governor Wilson to his advantage. If the country knows of their determination to defeat him by the free use of money, I am sure it will do the rest. . . .

"If you can make any suggestions regarding the best way to meet the Wall Street attack, I would greatly appreciate it.

"From now, letters will reach me at Austin, Texas.

"With kind regards and best wishes for all of you, I am

"Faithfully yours,

"E. M. HOUSE."

In this letter Colonel House snowed himself a perfect student of Mr. Bryan. Nothing was better calculated to interest Mr. Bryan in Governor Wilson than the knowledge that Wall Street was furiously opposed to him, and to wave the name of Mr. Morgan in front of Mr. Bryan's eyes was the nearest equivalent of waving the proverbial red rag in front of the proverbial bull. Mr. Wilson broke with Colonel Harvey because Colonel Harvey's support

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of him branded Wilson as the candidate of Wall Street, and Mr. Bryan heartily approved Mr. Wilson's action. Mr. Bryan answered Colonel House from Kingston, Jamaica, on December 28, 1911, and he wrote:

"My dear Mr. House:

". . . Am anxious to get back and find out more of the political situation. I shall attend the Washington banquet on the eighth of January and will have a chance to learn how things are shaping up.

"I am glad Governor Wilson recognizes that he has the opposition of Morgan and the rest of Wall Street. If he is nominated it must be by the Progressive Democrats, and the more progressive he is the better.

"The Washington banquet will give him a good chance to speak out against the trusts and the Aldrich currency scheme.

"Yours very truly,
"W. J. BRYAN."

Things were going very nicely, but it was obvious that the patient needed considerably more attention, and at this crucial moment, while Mr. Bryan was on his way north from his trip to Jamaica, wicked newspapers got hold of and published the following letter which Mr. Wilson, then a private citizen, had written to Mr. Adrian H. Joline, a railroad president, on April 29, 1907:

"Princeton, New Jersey.

"April 29, 1907.

"My Dear Mr. Joline:

"Thank you very much for sending me your address at Parsons, Kan., before the board of directors of the Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railway Company. I have read it

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with relish and entire agreement. Would that we could do something, at once dignified and effective, to knock Mr. Bryan once for all into a cocked hat!

“Cordially and sincerely yours,

“WOODROW WILSON.”

When this letter was suddenly published by the most important newspapers in the United States, there was great excitement in the camp of Woodrow Wilson's admirers. Something had to be done, and quickly, if the effect of Colonel House's careful nursing was not to be destroyed completely. Wilson and his campaign manager, McCombs, worked for hours over how to get out of the difficulty created by the publication of this letter. By this time Mr. Bryan, it was learned, was in Raleigh, N. C., on his way to Washington to attend the Jackson Day dinner at which both he and Mr. Wilson were scheduled to speak. One of the leading citizens of Raleigh was Josephus Daniels, a newspaper publisher, who had been a strong supporter and sincere friend of Mr. Bryan's since the days of 1896, and who was now interested also in Mr. Wilson. Wilson's managers communicated with Mr. Daniels and asked him to explain to Mr. Bryan that the reactionary newspapers always printed attacks on Mr. Wilson just before he was to make a speech, so that they might spoil the effect of his speech, and that these attacks, directed by the malignant forces of Wall Street, were blows aimed at the progressive democracy in which both Mr. Bryan and Mr. Wilson were so greatly interested. Then Mr. McCombs asked his publicity man to go to the station in Washington and see how Mr. Bryan looked when he arrived in Washington. Meanwhile, Senator O'Gorman, a strong supporter of Mr. Wil-

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son, had a brilliant idea. Mr. Wilson could not very well deny his own letter, and any statement he made would hardly explain the vehemence of the "knocked into a cocked hat" phrase. Mr. O'Gorman thought that it would be a good idea if Governor Wilson incorporated in his speech at the Jackson Day dinner, where all the eminent Democrats of the nation would celebrate, something nice and pleasant about Mr. Bryan. Governor Wilson and his admirers worked busily on just what should be said concerning Mr. Bryan in the speech, and in the meantime Mr. Wilson merely said to newspaper reporters when they questioned him concerning his letter to Mr. Joline: "Even if a man has written letters, it ought not to embarrass him if they are published. Even if a man changes his mind, it ought not to embarrass him."

At the Union Station in Washington, a member of Mr. McCombs's press staff had the following interview with Mr. Bryan: "Q. What have you got to say about the Joline letter, Mr. Bryan?"

"A. I have nothing to say about that. I have already made a statement. The persons who procured its publication are probably satisfied. I think that covers it.

"Q. Do you know that T. F. Ryan was concerned in the writing or the reception of the letter?"

"A. I have nothing to say.

"Q. When you were abroad, Mr. Bryan, did you see the Sphinx?"

"A. Yes, and I paid some attention to studying its methods."

His publicity man reported this interview to the nervous Mr. McCombs and added his impression that Mr. Bryan looked "sunny and cheerful."

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On the morning of the Jackson Day dinner Wilson sat in conference with his friends Mr. Morgenthau, Dudley Field Malone, and Franklin P. Glass. They discussed the Joline letter, and, according to Ambassador Morgenthau's memoirs Wilson listened and then said: "Now, let me bare my mind to you. What did I really mean when I wrote that letter? I have always admired Mr. Bryan as a clean-thinking, progressive citizen. I have always admired his methods of diagnosing the troubles and difficulties of the country. But I have never admired, nor approved, his remedies. What I really meant, then, was that *his remedies* should be knocked into a cocked hat." "We then discussed the means by which this explanation should be given to the public," added Mr. Morgenthau. But what Mr. Wilson really meant, and what nobody in the United States of America failed to perceive that he meant by his phrase, was that Mr. Bryan was a troublesome ninny, and it was fortunate for the consummation of Mr. Wilson's ambitions that Mr. Bryan's political condition happened to be such that it was the better part of discretion for him to forget and to forgive.

Just before the Jackson Day dinner on January 8, 1912, Governor Wilson made a speech before the National Press Club in Washington, in the course of which he said: "A man may even change his mind. It is nothing to be ashamed of, to change your mind about some conclusion you may have reached on insufficient information.

"A man may even write a letter, just so it is a frank expression, and you have nothing to be ashamed of. The letter may even be printed. It may sometimes prove inconvenient. But if it is a frank expression, there is nothing to be ashamed of.

"The man who refuses to change his mind, when he finds

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he is wrong, ought to be blown apart by dynamite, so that his parts can be properly and normally readjusted."

The Jackson Day dinner took place that night, with more than seven hundred Democrats present, including all the leading candidates for the Presidency. Ambassador Morgenthau described the scene, which he designated "one of the most interesting spectacles of my whole experience": "At the speakers' table sat Senator O'Gorman, the toast-master of the evening. At his right was William Jennings Bryan, the ever-hopeful leader of the Democrats, who was playing each of the important candidates against the other, in the hope of killing them all off, and securing the nomination himself. There sat also Underwood and Clark and Foss and Hearst and Marshall. Pomerene was there, as the representative of Governor Harmon, of Ohio, and Judge Parker, happily forgetting his defeat. Each man knew that this moment was charged with fateful destiny. As each one made his speech, I could see the others taking his measure, and watching the crowd of diners to divine its reaction. Bryan, as the patriarch of candidates, was to make the last address of the evening. It was to be his opportunity for a great oration that would restore to him the mastery of the party.

"Wilson was the last speaker to precede him. When he arose, there was a brief applause of politeness, with an extra short outburst from the little handful of fifteen adherents. Every speaker who had gone before him had talked of party harmony. Wilson seized the opportunity of this text to clear up, with one masterly stroke, the dilemma of the 'cocked hat' story."

Mr. Wilson, turning to Mr. Bryan, said: "What I want to say is that one of the most striking things in recent years

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is that with all the rise and fall of particular ideas, with all the ebb and flow of particular proposals, there has been an interesting fixed point in the history of the Democratic party, and the fixed point has been the character, and the devotion, and the preachings of William Jennings Bryan.

"I, for my part, never want to forget this—that while we have differed with Mr. Bryan upon this occasion and upon that with regard to the specific things to be done, he has gone serenely on, pointing out to more and more convinced people what it was that was the matter. He has had the steadfast vision all along of what it was that was the matter, and he has, not any more than Andrew Jackson did, not based his character upon calculation, but has based it upon principle."

When Mr. Wilson spoke of "what was the matter," some one shouted, "What was it?" And another voice answered, "Bryan." But most of the diners applauded vigorously, and Mr. Bryan was very pleased with the ovation and with Mr. Wilson's reference to him. Ambassador Morgenthau, who was then one of the financial backers of Mr. Wilson's campaign, watched Mr. Bryan's face carefully during the rest of Wilson's speech. He wrote: "I have never seen a more interesting play of expression on the stage than the exhibition which he unconsciously gave. Here was the rising of a new political star, which he well knew meant the setting of his own. His face expressed in turn surprise, alarm, hesitation, doubt, gloom, despair. When Wilson took his seat amidst tremendous applause Bryan's face was that of a man who had met his Waterloo. He rose like one who was dazed, and made a speech of abdication. He said that the time had come when a new man should be nominated, a man who was free from the asperities of the past,

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and that he was willing to march in the ranks of the party, and work with the rest of us to help on this victory, which he saw assured. He then started to sit down, but every one applauded so vigorously, shouting 'Go on! Go on!' that he became confused. For once, his political sagacity forsook him: he did not realize that he should stop. He regained his feet, and made a sad anti-climax by telling the diners stories of his observations in the Philippines and elsewhere. The evening was a Wilson triumph."

Mr. Morgenthau may have been slightly mistaken about what he had heard some years ago when he came to write his memoirs, for none of the newspaper accounts of Mr. Bryan's speech indicate that he had said that the time had come when a new man should be nominated.

Governor Wilson's secretary, Tumulty, reports in his book on Woodrow Wilson: "On his return from Washington to Trenton, Governor Wilson told me that Mr. Bryan had bidden him not to worry about the publication of the Joline letter, saying: 'I, of course, knew that you were not with me in my position on the currency,' and Woodrow Wilson replied: 'All I can say, Mr. Bryan, is that you are a great, big man.' " And Mr. Bryan went to his Rio Grande farm without telling any one exactly who he thought should be the next President of the United States, while Mr. Wilson returned to New Jersey to continue the fight for his political future.

Later in January, 1912, statements were published in the newspapers concerning Governor Wilson's break with Colonel Harvey, the first man who had presented the name of Woodrow Wilson as a candidate for President. Mr. Bryan made the following statement concerning Wilson's frank admission that Colonel Harvey's support was doing

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him harm because Colonel Harvey was well known in Wall Street: "It must pain Governor Wilson to break with his old friends, but the break must necessarily come unless he turns back or they go forward. A man is known by the company he keeps, and he cannot keep company with those going in opposite directions. Governor Wilson must prepare himself for other desertions; they will distress him, but there is abundant consolation of duty well done." This statement is also significant in the light of Mr. Bryan's own later position with reference to the views of Woodrow Wilson.

Colonel House wrote Mr. Bryan, congratulating him for his kind reaction to the Joline letter. "Your friends," wrote the Colonel, "all knew your bigness of mind and heart, but it was an object lesson to those who thought of you differently." And then on February 2, 1912, the Colonel wrote from Austin, Texas, to Wilson:

"My dear Governor Wilson:

"Mr. Bryan is now on his Rio Grande farm, and I have asked him here before he leaves. In the meantime I will continue to keep in touch with him by correspondence. Please let me know if there is anything you would like to have suggested to him, for there can be no better place to do this than by the quiet fireside. I am, my dear Governor,

"Your very sincere

"E. M. HOUSE."

But from Colonel House's next letter, written this time to Mr. McCombs, we learn that Mr. Bryan did not stop at Austin and sit at the Colonel's quiet fireside, because he arrived there at four o'clock in the morning, "which he thought a little early for me." Colonel House then asked

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the Wilson campaign manager to send him any little things he wished inserted in *The Commoner*. "I agree with you," he added, "that Mr. Bryan's support is absolutely essential, not only for nomination but for election afterward; and I shall make it my particular province to keep in touch with him and endeavor to influence him along the lines desired. He has evolved considerably in our direction, for when I first talked to him in October he did not have Governor Wilson much in mind."

But for all the Colonel's persistent efforts the process of evolution in Bryan's mind was painfully slow. House breakfasted with Mr. and Mrs. Bryan at the Holland House in New York in April, 1912, and "persuaded him to declare his belief that either Clark or Wilson would be an acceptable candidate. I could not get him to go further than this, although I pointed out that all his enemies were in the combination to defeat Wilson. Mrs. Bryan helped me in getting a favorable decision for Woodrow Wilson. I remember I breakfasted with the Bryans at the Holland House, and every argument I made in behalf of Wilson was supplemented by Mrs. Bryan." House could not help coming to the conclusion that several other suspicious men had already come to, namely, that Bryan "would not scorn the nomination," and in a letter to his friend Senator Culberson of Texas on May 1, 1912, he feared that the opposing candidates might be Bryan and Roosevelt, and he thought that in that event Roosevelt would win. However, that letter was written before the Republican convention at Chicago, where Mr. Roosevelt kicked over all the traces that were not hitched to his personal star. That action, as we have seen, gave the Democrats the chance of their lives, and it was of that chance that William Jennings Bryan

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was thinking as he rode in the railroad coach from Chicago to Baltimore.

II

Bryan had already insisted in public that the next candidate of the Democratic party for President must be a progressive Democrat; in the pages of *The Commoner* he had published a questionnaire which he suggested that his admirers send to the various Presidential candidates before they made up their minds. The questions concerned the tariff, the trusts, popular election of Senators, the income tax, Philippine independence, publicity for campaign contributions, State rights, strict regulation of railroads, and the conservative Aldrich currency plan of the Republican party. And then he discovered that the national committee had decided upon Judge Alton B. Parker for temporary chairman of the convention. Bryan immediately sent the following telegram to all the leading candidates: "I took it for granted that no committeeman interested in Democratic success would desire to offend the members of a convention, overwhelmingly progressive, by naming a reactionary to sound the keynote of the campaign. Eight members of the sub-committee, however, have, over the protest of the remaining eight, agreed not only on a reactionary but upon the one Democrat among those not candidates for the Presidential nomination who is in the eyes of the public most conspicuously identified with the reactionary element of the party. I shall be pleased to join you and your friends in opposing his selection by the full committee or by the convention. Kindly answer here."

Champ Clark answered that it was his opinion that the "supreme consideration should be to prevent any discord

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in the convention." Some of the other candidates approved of Parker's selection: "On the whole," wrote Wilson's manager, McCombs, "there was a feeling in the National Committee that Mr. Bryan had put all the candidates in a very embarrassing position and had raised a very unnecessary issue. . . . The atmosphere of Baltimore could be summed up in these words: 'What shall we do with Bryan and what is Bryan going to do with us?'" The Wilson managers felt, however, that their candidate should agree with Mr. Bryan, because the fight over the temporary chairmanship would be largely forgotten after the temporary chairman made his speech, but there was no chance of forgetting Mr. Bryan until the convention adjourned *sine die*. Woodrow Wilson sent Bryan the following telegram: "You are quite right. Before hearing of your message I clearly stated my position. The Baltimore convention is to be a convention of progressives, of men who are progressives, in principle and by conviction. It must, if it is not put in a wrong light before the convention, express its convictions in its organization and in its choice of men who are to speak for it. You are to be a member of this convention, and are entirely within your rights in doing everything within your power to bring that result about.

"No one will doubt where my sympathies lie; and you will, I am sure, find my friends in the convention acting upon clear conviction and always in the interest of the people's cause. I am happy in the confidence that they need no suggestion from me."

When Bryan arrived in Baltimore, reporters asked him if he was a candidate, and he answered: "Be patient! Hush! Wait! There is no hurry!" Bryan called on Judge Parker before the convention opened and asked him to give up the

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position of temporary chairman, but Judge Parker got angry at Mr. Bryan's suggestion.

As soon as the convention opened Bryan made a speech against the selection of Judge Parker and offered in his place the name of his friend, John W. Kern. He began his skillful speech by reminding the delegates that the recommendation of the national committee for temporary chairman was not final, but subject to the approval of the delegates, and then he told the delegates that he considered that he had a right to speak out because "in three campaigns I have been the champion of the Democratic party's principles, and that in three campaigns I have received the vote of six millions and a half of Democrats. (*Applause.*)" He then said that he appreciated the fact that he had enemies, and stated that no man could "carry on a political warfare in defense of the mass of the people for sixteen years without making enemies." "The fact that I have lived is proof that I have not deserted the people. If for a moment I had forgotten them, they would not have remembered me." There were roars of delight as Bryan in his professional black suit and white string tie stood watching his crowd, his heavy brows contracted and his thin long mouth, like a dagger slit, shut in earnest wrath; the fringes of his hair were wet with perspiration. Then, pointing to a picture of Thomas Jefferson with a motto underneath, which hung in the hall, Bryan said: "I take for my text this morning the text that the committee has been kind enough to place upon the wall for my use. 'He never sold the truth to serve the hour.' That is the language of the hero of Monticello, and I would not be worthy of the support I have received if I were willing to sell the truth to serve the present hour." Mrs. Bryan, who was sitting just back of the platform,

heard an exasperated delegate say to another, "I told them that he would use that quotation if they put it up there."

Then Bryan told the delegates that this was no ordinary fight, that men all over the country were risking their bread and butter to serve the cause of the people. Among these he placed the faithful John W. Kern, who had supported Bryan in 1896 and had fought by his side ever since. "And," he added, "the delegates to this convention must not presume upon the ignorance of those people who did not come, either because they had not influence enough to be elected delegates or money enough to pay the expenses of the trip, but who have as much interest in the party's welfare as we who speak for them today. (*Applause.*) Those people will know that the influences which dominated the convention at Chicago and made its conclusion a farce before the country are here and are more brazenly at work than they were at Chicago. (*Applause.*)

"I appeal to you: Let the commencement of this convention be such a commencement that the Democrats of this country may raise their heads among their fellows and say, 'The Democratic party is true to the people. You cannot frighten it with your Ryans nor buy it with your Belmonts.'" There was tremendous applause, and Bryan should have sat down. The huge building shook as men jumped to their feet, waved their hats and screamed their approval. It was almost another Cross of Gold and Crown of Thorns, but, as the New York *World* remarked, there was no friend near to pull Bryan's coat tails, and he thought that he had more to say. He went on to elaborate the fact that Wall Street was trying to control the convention, as it had done in 1904 when Judge Parker was the candidate for President, and that then Wall Street had turned on its

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own candidate and had helped to elect Roosevelt. "It [the country] has not forgotten that it is the same man backed by the same influence that is to be forced on this convention to open a progressive campaign with a paralyzing speech that will dishearten every man in it. (*Applause.*) You ask me how I know without reading it that that speech would not be satisfactory. Let me tell you; a speech is not so many words; it is the man and not the words that makes a speech." After tracing the growth of progressive principles throughout the world, Bryan ended with this oratorical effect: "We have been traveling in the wilderness. We have now come in sight of the promised land. During all the weary hours of darkness progressive democracy has been the people's pillar of fire by night. I pray you, delegates, now the dawn has come, do not rob our party of the right so well earned to be the people's pillar of cloud by day." It was this figure of speech, for which Bryan had returned once more to the Bible, that he planned as another Cross of Gold and Crown of Thorns, but he forgot that times had changed since 1896, and he also did not realize that the metaphor was not sufficiently terse to bear repetition. "You cannot frighten it with your Ryans nor buy it with your Belmonts" was much better, and Bryan records his disappointment in his *Memoirs*: "I have regarded my use of the 'pillar and cloud' of fire of the children of Israel as one of the most appropriate references that I have ever made to the Bible in a political argument, but there was so much confusion in the convention that it seemed to make but little impression and I think I saw but one reference to it in the papers. It illustrates an experience that one frequently has; a phrase upon which one sets great store is often ignored, while a sentence which is spoken on the spur of the moment and without

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thought of its being considered important, will attract widespread attention." Then, too, the actor was growing too old. The signs of continued grease paint were too visible in the creases of his large face, and the palm-leaf fan in his hand waved more pitifully. The theater is the province of youth. There were almost as many jeers for Bryan as there were cheers.

Senator Kern made a glowing tribute to Bryan and refused to be a candidate for temporary chairman. "My fellow Democrats," said Senator Kern, "you will not promote harmony, you will not point the way to victory by jeering or deriding the name of the man who led your fortunes in 1908. You may put him to the wheel, you may humiliate him here, but in so doing you will bring pain to the hearts of six million men in America who would gladly die for him. (*Applause.*) You may kill him, but you do not commit homicide when you kill him; you commit suicide." Bryan himself then consented to be a candidate for temporary chairman, but on the vote of the convention Parker was chosen with 579 votes to 508 for Bryan. In this vote the forces of Champ Clark stood by Parker, which was their first bad mistake, and the Wilson forces threw all their support to Bryan. If Clark's supporters had not voted for Judge Parker, he would have been defeated. Then the convention adjourned until the evening. Bryan, who was writing about the convention for a newspaper syndicate, sent the following comment: "Judge Parker was escorted to the platform after his nomination had been made unanimous and began to deliver his address, but it had such a moving effect upon the audience that the reading was suspended and the convention adjourned until eight o'clock this evening. Various explanations might be given of the

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action of the crowd. Probably the most reasonable is that it was 3:30 and many were hungry. There is another explanation, however, that is worth presenting for consideration. People will not remain in a large hall unless they can understand what is being said, and as Mr. Parker's speech was written in the language of Wall Street, only two or three hundred of the delegates could understand it and the committee had been so busy with the machine that it had neglected to provide an interpreter to translate the speech into the everyday language of Democrats." Another possible explanation is that Mr. Bryan's own speech had exhausted the oratorical possibilities of the afternoon.

Through the corridors of the hotels there flew songs about Bryan, the most popular of which was called "I'd kinda like to vote for Bryan," and it went:

"Champ Clark, you're a dandy;
The people love you too.
As Speaker you're the candy
And know just what to do.
You'd make a daisy President,
On that we'll agree;
And even with that houn' song,
You're as welcome as can be
To all I have except my vote, for
Really don't you see:

Chorus

"I'd kinda like to vote for Bryan.
Now, honest, wouldn't you?
I'd kinda like to vote for Bryan,
For this time he'll pull through;

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I'd kinda like to vote for Bryan—
William Jennings Bryan:
I'd kinda like to vote for Bryan,
And that's just what I'll do."

But there were many powerful men in the convention who were determined that such an opportunity would under no circumstances be offered to the sentimental delegates.

During the next two days of the convention Bryan was mainly occupied with the work of the Resolutions Committee, which was drafting the platform. Bryan had succeeded in getting the convention to reverse the usual procedure and adopt the platform before nominating the candidate, in order to prevent a repetition of the crisis created in 1904 after Parker had been nominated and then had sent his telegram saying that he would not run if the convention did not declare in favor of the gold standard.

Late Wednesday night Bryan's brother, Charles W. Bryan, who was also a delegate from Nebraska, told his brother Will that he had learned that the New York delegation was planning to support Clark on the second ballot, and that this meant that the Clark managers were making a deal with the hated Wall Street. Charles Bryan thought that the only way to prevent this deal from becoming successful was for some one to introduce a resolution denouncing Murphy of Tammany Hall, August Belmont, and Thomas Fortune Ryan, all of whom were delegates in the convention, and also their alleged employer, J. P. Morgan. If Clark's supporters denounced such a resolution, it would then be known to the convention that they were allied with Wall Street. He also suggested that the resolution contain a clause providing for the immediate expulsion of Murphy,

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Belmont, and Ryan from the convention. Bryan thought his brother's idea a good one, and he dictated a resolution he thought appropriate. It was worded as follows:

"Resolved, That in this crisis in our party's career and in our country's history this convention sends greetings to the people of the United States, and assures them that the party of Jefferson and of Jackson is still the champion of popular government and equality before the law. As proof of our fidelity to the people, we hereby declare ourselves opposed to the nomination of any candidate for President who is the representative of or under obligation to J. Pierpont Morgan, Thomas F. Ryan, August Belmont, or any other member of the privilege-hunting and favor-seeking class.

"Be It Further Resolved, That we demand the withdrawal from the convention of any delegate or delegates constituting or representing the above-named interests."

Bryan's brother Charles showed this resolution to several of their friends among the delegations. They all advised against introducing the resolution. When he saw his brother Will, he was discouraged and told him that they were alone. "I will introduce it myself," Bryan replied.

When the convention met that Thursday evening, Bryan hurried to the platform. He wished to introduce his resolution as soon as the convention was formally opened, for he knew that if it became known that he intended to introduce such a resolution, he would not be permitted to speak. As he was making his way to the platform, some one pulled him aside and introduced him to Mrs. William Howard Taft. Bryan had intended to say something in his speech introducing his resolution about the same Wall Street in-

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terests who had succeeded in forcing the nomination of Mr. Taft. "When I found that Mrs. Taft was there," Bryan wrote in his *Memoirs*, "I felt that it would be ungenerous to give her pain by such a reference to her husband and I therefore struck out the offensive words. President Taft afterwards learned of it, and in his characteristic way thanked me for the consideration shown his wife."

Bryan's friend Ollie James was permanent chairman of the convention, and he consented to recognize Bryan as soon as the convention opened. Bryan was recognized, and he asked for permission to introduce a resolution, which was voted him. He introduced the above resolution, and the convention went mad. Bryan sat upon the platform and watched a seething mass of enraged delegates expressing themselves by action and howls or attempts at speech. There were cries of "Beat him up," "Throw him out," "Assassinate him." "One member of the Congress," Bryan wrote, "rushed to the platform and, gesticulating violently, denounced me until he frothed at the mouth, and almost hysterical he was carried away by friends."

There was a bitter debate. Flood, of Virginia, denounced Bryan's resolution, and Cone Johnson, of Texas, whom the *World* described as "a leather-lunged orator whose gaudy flights of rhetoric commanded instant and respectful attention," shouted, "All I know and all that I want to know is that Bryan is on one side, and Wall Street is on the other." There were cheers, and Bryan wrote many years later in his *Memoirs*: "Honorable Cone Johnson of Texas made a speech in which he condensed a great deal in a few words. I became better acquainted with him afterwards when he came into the State Department as solicitor."

Meanwhile, Bryan did a clever thing. Many Democrats

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who were not friends of Murphy, Morgan, Belmont, and Ryan objected to the second half of Bryan's resolution providing for the withdrawal of delegates representing those interests, for they maintained that they had been duly elected and were entitled to their seats. Bryan felt that many delegates would use this legitimate argument as an excuse for not voting for the first part of the resolution, denouncing Murphy, Morgan, Belmont, and Ryan, and therefore he withdrew the second part of it, and made his resolution pure denunciation without providing for the withdrawal of any delegates. "I do not know how many in the convention," Bryan wrote, "understood what I had done; they were too excited to distinguish between the two paragraphs. When the roll was called, the tumult reached its height. A state would be called; its chairman would announce its full vote, 'Aye.' Then half the delegation would jump to their feet and demand a poll, shaking their fists and shouting in violent language. I do not think there were ever before so many people in one hall, wildly excited and swearing at one another without some one being hurt. I heard afterwards of delegates who were loudly expressing the hope that somebody would take me out and hang me. One delegate, whom I afterward aided to a high position, stated that he would give twenty-five thousand dollars to anybody who would kill me."

But the delegates did not dare vote against Bryan's general sentiment that the convention must not be controlled by Wall Street or "the privilege-hunting and favor-seeking class." The resolution was carried by more than four to one, and even New York voted for it. Some one reported to Bryan afterward that just before the New York delegation voted, Murphy turned to Belmont and said, "August,

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listen and hear yourself vote yourself out of the convention."

After the passage of this resolution the delegates were showered with telegrams from their constituents approving Bryan's course, just as they had received many telegrams after Bryan's first speech denouncing Parker. The telegraph companies estimated that 110,000 telegrams were received by delegates. "When I was given credit for having exerted an influence on the convention," Bryan wrote in his *Memoirs*, "I replied that I had simply turned the faucet and allowed public sentiment to flow in upon the convention, deserving no personal credit except for knowing where the faucet was and the height of the stand-pipe from which the public opinion flowed."

The next day, Friday, balloting began for candidates. Champ Clark had more votes than any other candidate from the start, but he did not have nearly enough to get the required two-thirds. Bryan tells us that he purposely remained away from the floor of the convention hall during the balloting because he did not wish his great influence to be used against or for any of the candidates, except those he had bitterly opposed as the tools of Wall Street. The voting went on all day without much change, with Champ Clark and Wilson leading in number of votes, and with Champ Clark in the majority. "My intention was," Bryan wrote in his *Memoirs*, "to keep out of the hall until the nomination was made and then appear at a time when I could make a speech in support of the candidate, whoever he might be."

On Saturday, June 29, Woodrow Wilson called his managers by telephone, according to Maurice Lyons, secretary to William F. McCombs. He had a message for Mr. Bryan, which Mr. Lyons and Mr. Vick copied and handed

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to Mr. Bryan. Here is the message, as given in Mr. Lyons's book *William F. McCombs, the President Maker*: "It has become known that the present deadlock is being maintained for the purpose of enabling New York, a delegation controlled by a single group of men, to determine the nominee and thus bind the candidate to them. In these circumstances it is the imperative duty of each candidate for the nomination to see to it that his own independence is beyond question. I can see no other way to do this than to declare that he will not accept the nomination if it cannot be secured without the aid of that delegation. For myself I have no hesitation in making that declaration. The freedom of the Party and its candidate and the security of the Government against private control constitutes the supreme consideration."

Then Mr. Wilson added a second part to his message. He asked that Mr. Bryan be informed: "The only reason the Governor does not cause the publication of this statement is because his vote in the convention having stood still, he [the Governor] would regard it as a reflection on himself because his position of independence is so well known." This message was received while the thirteenth ballot was being taken. Bryan wrote in his *Memoirs* that while this ballot was being called, he was in the room of the Resolutions Committee. He heard an uproar on the floor of the convention and went out to learn what was happening. New York, with its ninety delegates voting as Tammany Hall leader Charles F. Murphy told them to vote, had just switched its support from Judge Harmon to Champ Clark. This caused a great demonstration, and while the cheering was going on, Bryan took his seat with his Nebraska delegation, and he never left the hall again until

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the sessions adjourned, not even for food. His brother brought him sandwiches, and an assistant sergeant-at-arms brought him water. When Nebraska was called, a delegate requested that Nebraska be passed for the moment.

When the convention roll was being called for the fourteenth ballot, Bryan arose when Nebraska was reached. William Sulzer, of New York, who was presiding over the convention temporarily, demanded to know what the gentleman from Nebraska wanted. The gentleman from Nebraska wanted to explain his vote. An attempt was made to declare him out of order, and there were howls of protest and approval from delegates. Mr. Bryan began to say, "As long as Mr. Ryan's agent—as long as New York's ninety votes are recorded for Mr. Clark, I withhold my vote from him and cast it—" Whereupon there was so much noise from the delegates that the gentleman from Nebraska was howled down. Senator Stone arose and asked that the delegates hear with patience the distinguished delegate from Nebraska. Unanimous consent was voted for Bryan to speak.

Bryan then went on to explain that his delegation, which had been instructed in Nebraska to vote for Clark, was divided, and since a poll was demanded, he wished to explain his own personal reasons for casting his vote as he was about to cast it, and he assured the delegates, "When I speak for myself I speak for some others in this hall, and I am sure for a still larger number outside of this hall. (*Applause.*)" "I anticipated that this necessity would arise some time during the day," he said, "but I did not expect it to arise at so early an hour, and in anticipation I wrote out what I desire to submit. It will take me only a moment to read it, as I prefer that there shall be no mistake in the reporting and transcribing of it." He then assured the con-

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vention that Nebraska was a Democratic State, and told them what he had said emphatically before, that the nominee of this convention must be a progressive Democrat. Then he came to the momentous point of his statement: "By your resolution, adopted night before last, you, by a vote of more than four to one, pledged the country that you would nominate for the Presidency no man who represented or was obligated to Morgan, Ryan, Belmont, or any other member of the privilege-seeking, favor-hunting class. This pledge, if kept, will have more influence on the result of the election than the platform or the name of the candidate. How can that pledge be made effective? There is but one way; namely, to nominate a candidate who is under no obligation to those whom these influences directly or indirectly control. The vote of the state of New York in this convention, as cast under the unit rule, does not represent the intelligence, the virtue, the Democracy, or the patriotism of the ninety men who are here. It represents the will of one man—Charles F. Murphy—and he represents the influences that dominated the Republican convention at Chicago and are trying to dominate this convention. (*Applause.*) If we nominate a candidate under conditions that enable these influences to say to our candidate, 'Remember now thy creator,' we cannot hope to appeal to the confidence of the progressive Democrats and Republicans of the nation. Nebraska, or that portion of the delegation for which I am authorized to speak, is not willing to participate in the nomination of any man who is willing to violate the resolution adopted by this convention, and to accept the high honor of the presidential nomination at the hands of Mr. Murphy. (*Applause.*)

"When we were instructed for Mr. Clark, the Demo-

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cratic voters who instructed us did so with the distinct understanding that Mr. Clark stood for progressive Democracy. (*Applause.*) Mr. Clark's representatives appealed for support on no other ground. They contended that Mr. Clark was more progressive than Mr. Wilson, and indignantly denied that there was any coöperation between Mr. Clark and the reactionary element of the party. Upon no other condition could Mr. Clark have received a plurality of the Democratic vote of Nebraska. The thirteen delegates for whom I speak stand ready to carry out the instructions given in the spirit in which they were given, and upon the conditions under which they were given (*Applause*); but some of these delegates—I cannot say for how many I speak, because we have not had a chance to take a poll—will not participate in the nomination of any man whose nomination depends upon the vote of the New York delegation. (*Applause.*)

“Speaking for myself, and for any of the delegation who may decide to join me, I shall withhold my vote from Mr. Clark as long as New York's vote is recorded for him. (*Applause.*) And the position that I take in regard to Mr. Clark I will take in regard to any other candidate whose name is now or may be before the convention. I shall not be a party to the nomination of any man, no matter who he may be, or from what section of the country he comes, who will not, when elected, be absolutely free to carry out the anti-Morgan-Ryan-Belmont resolution, and make his administration reflect the wishes and the hopes of those who believe in a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. (*Applause.*)

“If we nominate a candidate who is under no obligation to these interests which speak through Mr. Murphy,

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I shall offer a resolution authorizing and directing the Presidential candidate to select a campaign committee to manage the campaign, in order that he may not be compelled to suffer the humiliation and act under the embarrassment that I have, in having men participate in the management of his campaign who have no sympathy with the party's aims, and in whose Democracy the general public has no confidence.

"Having explained the position taken by myself and those in the delegation who view the subject from the same standpoint, I will now announce my vote."

Here Bryan was interrupted by terrific noise. As Bryan said, "I will announce my vote," a powerful voice from North Carolina shouted, "For God's sake, do." Some of the delegates demanded permission to ask Bryan questions, and he expressed his willingness to answer. One delegate shouted at him, "Are you a Democrat?" This made Bryan angry, and he answered: "My Democracy has been certified to by six and a half million Democrats; but I will ask the secretary to enter on the record one dissenting vote, if the gentleman will give me his name. Some gentleman asked me if I was a Democrat, and I would like to have his name, that I may put it by the side of Ryan and Belmont, who were not Democrats when I was a candidate for the Presidency. (*Applause.*)" Mr. John B. Knox, of Alabama, said, "There are a thousand delegates here, and we have something else to do besides listening to Mr. Bryan make his fourth or fifth speech." After some more arguments between Bryan and delegates who wanted to know if he would support the nominee even if that nominee was supported by New York, Bryan said: "Now I am prepared to announce my vote, unless again interrupted. With the understanding

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that I shall stand ready to withdraw my vote from the one for whom I am going to cast it, whenever New York casts her vote for him, I cast my vote for Nebraska's second choice, Governor Wilson." There was great applause. Then Bryan was attacked in speeches by several delegates. The most effective attack came from John B. Stanchfield, of New York, who defended the reputation of the delegates of New York and remarked: "If this delegation, so composed, be the puppets of wax, as insinuated by the gentleman from Nebraska, we say to that money-grabbing, selfish, office-seeking, favor-hunting, publicity-loving marplot from Nebraska that if the ninety delegates from New York, who are of the character I have described, are within the control and power of one man, they are moved by wires of tremendous human voltage." Then Mr. Stanchfield made the open accusation on the floor of the convention of what many men were believing but not saying: "Colonel Bryan never intended to support the candidate of this convention unless that candidate should be Bryan himself. (*Applause.*) We have heard for months gone by that Colonel Bryan, by his voice and influence, was supporting Woodrow Wilson in one place; that he was supporting Champ Clark in another; that he was combating Harmon here and Underwood there, all of the time desiring and intending, in pursuit of his own selfish ends, to produce a deadlock in this convention, in order that he might be the recipient of the fruits of the controversy and the discord so engendered." Then he ended his speech with this statement: "So far as I am personally concerned, I have said what I desired in explanation of my personal vote, and it is cast for Woodrow Wilson of New Jersey. (*Applause.*)"

One of those who was most convinced of Mr. Stanch-

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field's charge was Wilson's manager, McCombs. Clark had about one half the votes of the convention when Bryan switched his vote from Clark to Wilson, and Wilson needed more than one hundred votes for a majority. By Bryan's switch of his support, and thereby the support of the delegates who were under his influence or in his favor, Wilson and Clark were made about even. It was this condition that McCombs said Bryan was planning, and he wrote in his memoirs that he had had reports months before the convention assembled that this would be Bryan's purpose. Bryan expected, so those who held this theory claimed, that a deadlock which could not be broken would follow, and then the convention would be compelled to nominate Bryan.

After Bryan changed his support to Wilson, telegrams came in from all over the country urging delegates to support Wilson. Soon after Bryan's speech the convention adjourned from Saturday to Monday. Going up in the elevator of his hotel, Bryan rode with some newspaper men and cartoonists. "Well, boys, I put it over, didn't I? I put it over?" he insisted eagerly. Champ Clark hurried from Washington to Baltimore for the purpose of answering Bryan, but when he arrived the convention had already adjourned. It was his contention that one of Bryan's henchmen was standing in the railroad station in Washington and saw Clark leave for Baltimore, that he then informed the anti-Clark contingent in the convention that Clark was on his way to denounce Bryan before the convention, and that thereupon the Wilson managers secured the adjournment until Monday. Champ Clark had to content himself with a newspaper statement and with statements in his memoirs. But, meanwhile, both his supporters and other politicians were determined that Bryan should not succeed

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in creating a deadlock and making his own nomination possible. They preferred to support Wilson rather than bring about what they would have regarded as such an enormous calamity.

Saturday night, the night of Bryan's dramatic speech in the convention announcing his change from Clark to Wilson, there was much political jockeying going on in the Baltimore hotels. McCombs reported this incident in his memoirs: "At this stage Mr. Bryan was permitted among us by his speech for Wilson, although he had delivered only eighteen votes. We had about as much of Bryanism as the convention could endure.

"Nevertheless, about midnight, Mr. Bryan's brother Charles came to my room, which was at the other end of the hall from Mr. Bryan's room, and asked if I would have a talk with Mr. Bryan. I said, 'Of course!'

"I appeared in a few moments, as fresh as a man might be who had been at work since eight in the morning.

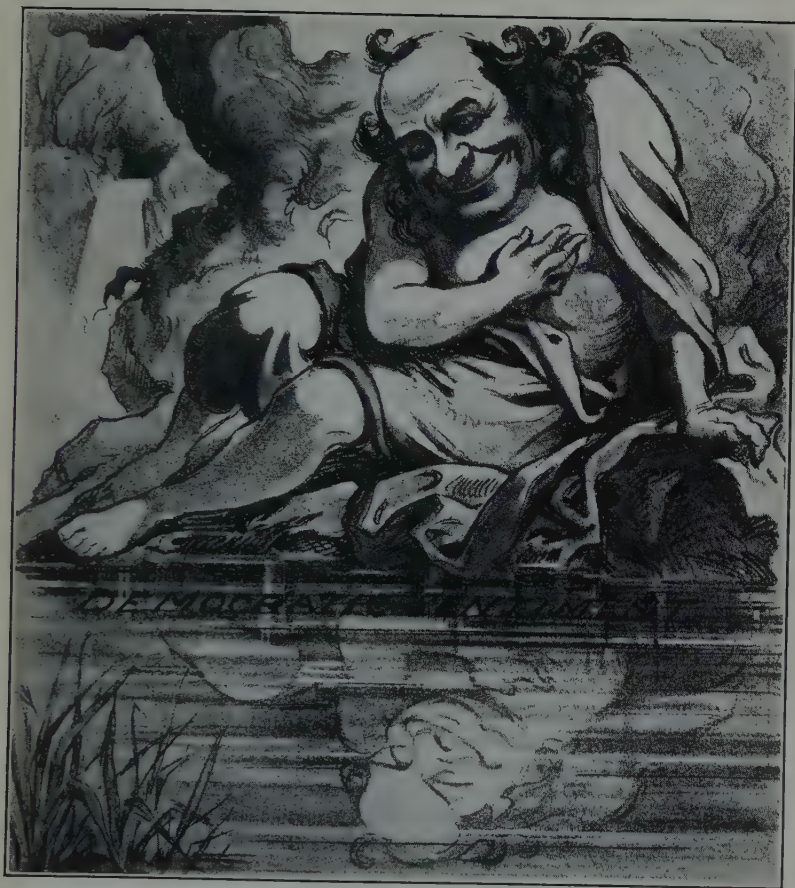
"Friends who were in Mr. Bryan's room disappeared instantly. We were alone. He was standing in a corner, with his side face to me. His appearance was very grim. His mouth looked like a mouth that has been created by a slit of a razor. He was clad in a brown undershirt, baggy black trousers and a pair of carpet slippers. His hair was ruffled.

"Mr. Bryan turned to me and, greeting me briskly, said:

"'McCombs, *you* know that Wilson cannot be nominated. *I* know that Clark cannot be nominated. You must turn your forces to a progressive Democrat like me,' placing a forefinger vigorously on his chest.

"I replied with great moderation, because I did not want him to have a chance to break out again:

"'Mr. Bryan, you have been in national politics longer



"NARCISSUS"

(From *Puck*, Feb. 5, 1908.)

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than I have; but Mr. Wilson has entrusted me with the management of his campaign in Baltimore. I told him before I left Sea Girt that I would rise or fall with his fortunes. We have not fallen!" and I rapidly left the room.

"Mr. Bryan was in a rage. I had secured the true Bryan position, which I had suspected since in March of 1912, namely—to create an equal Wilson and Clark strength, break through the middle and get the nomination."

In the little book which Mr. McCombs's secretary, Mr. Lyons, wrote, there is this statement: "Let me in all fairness and with all kindness deny the statement in Mr. McCombs' biography that he had any interview with Mr. Bryan in the Emerson Hotel that night in which Colonel Bryan suggested himself as the only logical candidate and that Governor Wilson's cause be deserted, because he [McCombs] was not there. I had hardly reached my room when Mr. McCombs 'phoned for me and I hurriedly returned to his apartment, where I found him in deep thought. Presently he stated: 'Lyons, I'm afraid of a deadlock. If Sullivan doesn't perform Bryan may again be nominated.'" Whether Mr. McCombs was imagining what he feared most, or whether Mr. Lyons was mistaken as to the time of his interview with his employer, it is impossible to determine, but it is a fact that when he compiled his memoirs, with the aid of Louis Jay Lang, McCombs was both very ill and deeply hurt. He had slaved to make Woodrow Wilson President, and he himself had wanted to be Secretary of the Treasury. McCombs was bitter and disappointed. His statements concerning various people are obviously erroneous, and those about Bryan may also have been inaccurate.

On Sunday morning Governor and Mrs. Wilson went to

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church in Trenton, New Jersey, and when they came out, they met ex-Governor Fort and Mrs. Fort. Governor Wilson, it is said, remarked to Governor Fort, "Bryan tells me I should withdraw, and McCombs also advises that. What do you think?" Wilson added, "Mrs. Wilson thinks I should stay in. She says I've nothing to lose." Governor Fort agreed with Mrs. Wilson. Wilson laughed and said, "Well, I believe I shall."¹

McCombs, however, in his memoirs, maintained that Wilson called him on the telephone and requested him to withdraw his name at a crucial period in the convention fight, because Wilson had become convinced that he could not be nominated. Others, however, have maintained that it was McCombs who became panicky.

The feeling that Bryan was trying to force his own candidacy helped Wilson a great deal, and Roger Sullivan, boss of the Illinois delegation, was among those who became convinced that anything, even Woodrow Wilson, was preferable to Bryan again. Meanwhile, there was an agonizing deadlock, during which Wilson was gaining votes slowly but surely. After the thirty-third ballot had been taken, Champ Clark's Missouri delegation took out a huge banner, on which in red letters were printed these words: "I have known Champ Clark for twenty years. He is absolutely incorruptible, and his life is above reproach. Never in all these years have I known him to be upon but one side of the question and that was the side that represented the people.—W. J. Bryan in 1910." The Missouri delegates turned this banner about so that various delegations could see it, and finally decided that it would be a good idea to put it right under Mr. Bryan's nose so that he might be

¹ *Woodrow Wilson*, by William Allen White, pp. 257-8.

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reminded of his inconsistency. Bryan became enraged and demanded who had ordered the banner to be put in front of his face. The Missourians booed and hooted at him, but other delegates cheered for him, and policemen protected Bryan from his antagonists. Bryan demanded the right to make another speech in answer to the question raised by the banner, but his demand was refused.

Wilson gained strength slowly, and finally on the forty-sixth ballot, on July 2, 1912, he was nominated for President. Champ Clark made the statement: "I lost the nomination solely through the vile and malicious slanders of Col. William Jennings Bryan, of Nebraska. True, these slanders were by innuendo and insinuation, but they were no less deadly for that reason." On the evening of that day an attempt was made to nominate Bryan for Vice-President, and he arose in the convention and made the following speech: "I have never advocated any man except with gladness, and I have never opposed any man except in sadness. (*Applause.*) If I have any enemies in this country, those who are my enemies have a monopoly of hatred. (*Applause.*) Nor is there one American citizen, in my own party or any other, whom I would oppose for anything, unless I believed that in not opposing him I was surrendering the interests of my country, which I hold above any person. (*Applause.*)

"I recognize that a man who fights must carry scars, and long before this campaign commenced I decided that I had been in so many battles and had alienated so many, that my party ought to have the leadership of some one who had not thus offended, and who thus might lead with greater hope of victory. (*Applause.*)

"Tonight I come with joy to surrender into the hands of

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the one chosen by this Convention a standard which I have carried in three campaigns, and I challenge my enemies to declare that it has ever been lowered in the face of the enemy. (*Applause.*)

"The same belief that led me to prefer another for the Presidency, rather than to be the candidate myself, leads me to prefer another rather than myself to be a candidate for Vice-President. It is not because the Vice-Presidency is lower in importance than the Presidency that I decline it. There is no office in this nation so low that I would not take it if I could serve my country by so doing. (*Applause.*)"

At the end of July Mrs. Bryan wrote to Colonel House from Fairview:

"My dear Mr. House:

"Just between us three, it was a remarkable fight. I was never so proud of Mr. Bryan—he managed so well. He threw the opponents into confusion; they could not keep from blundering and he outgeneraled them at every point. After all their careful planning, he wrested the power from their hands. Under the circumstances I am sure the nomination went to the best place and am entirely satisfied with the result. Will said all the time he did not think it was his time, and when we found the way things were set up we were sure of it.

"The people through the country regard him as a hero—he is filling Chautauqua dates in larger crowds than he has ever had, and is perfectly well. The mail! The secretary told me yesterday there are several thousand Baltimore letters still unopened, and it is impossible to handle the daily increase. I am not telling you these things to boast,

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but because I know you are interested to know how he is getting on since he has been 'buried' again.

"As to the possibilities in case of Democratic success: I am not sure what he would do. I know he dislikes routine work exceedingly, but believe he would do anything to help the cause. . . ."

In one of the articles he wrote for newspapers on the conventions of 1912 Bryan made this generalization: "Nothing is more likely to be overestimated in politics than that peculiar quality known as personal popularity."

CHAPTER VI

SECOND FIDDLE

WOODROW WILSON was elected President after an extraordinary campaign in which Bryan helped by his exceptional ability to make stirring speeches. The great question then became what was to be done with and for Mr. Bryan. Even as early as the September before the election day Wilson and his friend Colonel House had agreed that "it would be best to make him Secretary of State, in order to have him at Washington and in harmony with the Administration, rather than outside and possibly in a critical attitude." "Mrs. Bryan's influence, too," wrote Colonel House, "would be valuable." But, in spite of the fact that he knew the importance of having Mr. Bryan's tremendous influence with him instead of against him in his legislative recommendations and executive acts, Mr. Wilson was reluctant to appoint Bryan to the premiership of his cabinet, for he also realized Mr. Bryan's limitations. Had he not, five years previously, expressed the fervent wish that something dignified and effective might be done to knock Mr. Bryan into a cocked hat? He discussed the difficulty with his friends, and Walter H. Page wrote to his friend Dr. Edward A. Alderman, an eminent educator who was then recuperating from tuberculosis at Saranac Lake: "You are the only man I know who has time enough to think out a clear answer to this: 'What ought to be done with Bryan?' What *can* be done with Bryan? When you find the answer,

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telegraph me." And Colonel House noted in his diary: "Martin says Y has a plan for disposing of Bryan. I answered that a lot of people were busy with such plans, but I thought Governor Wilson and Mr. Bryan would be able to manage the matter themselves."

Immediately after election some men interested in the Christian religious development of the Far East endeavored to have the post of minister to China changed to that of an ambassador and to have Mr. Bryan appointed the first ambassador. Bryan felt highly complimented by the suggestion, for he was interested in Christian conversion almost as much as he was in politics, and, as one writer has expressed it, "he felt that it was his Christian duty to help the new republic in its critical hour."

William McCombs was very much against offering Mr. Bryan the post of Secretary of State, and while the convention was still sitting in Baltimore he called Mr. Wilson on the telephone. Wilson's secretary, Tumulty, has described the scene at the Wilson end of the telephone: "While this colloquy took place I was seated just outside of the telephone booth. When the Governor came out he told me of the talk he had had with McCombs, and that their principal discussion was the attempt by McCombs and his friends at Baltimore to exact from him a promise that in case of his nomination William Jennings Bryan should not be named for the post of Secretary of State; that a great deal in the way of delegates' votes from the Eastern states depended upon his giving this promise. The Governor then said to me: 'I will not bargain for this office. It would be foolish for me at this time to decide upon a Cabinet officer, and it would be outrageous to eliminate anybody from con-

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sideration now, particularly Mr. Bryan, who has rendered such fine service to the party in all seasons."

Later in Washington, when Tumulty told this incident to Bryan—in telling it he gave the words of the Presidential candidate as "I told him to go to hell"—Bryan was touched. He went home and told Mrs. Bryan, and she recorded it in her diary, with the note: "I want it to go down in history and fear it may not be recorded elsewhere." Mrs. Bryan added: "When Will told me about this his eyes filled with tears and he could hardly control his voice. He said, 'Doesn't that show the man? Wasn't that fine?'"

After the election McCombs begged Wilson not to appoint Bryan to any position, for he maintained that Mr. Bryan at Baltimore had fought Wilson and not aided him. "You are in his way," McCombs argued. "He will, if appointed, seek to build up, out of patronage, a machine to plague you. I beg of you again, do not take this man into your confidence." But Governor Wilson "laid stress upon the point that even if Bryan was out for mischief, he could accomplish less in the State than in any other department."

Mrs. Wilson, it has been said, was also against the appointment of Bryan as Secretary of State. "She insisted," wrote James Kerney, "that a split between Bryan and Wilson was inevitable and that when it came it would alienate most of the Nebraskan's followers, while the appointment itself would antagonize the conservative Democrats at once."

Colonel House, however, was of the opinion that Mr. Bryan must be offered the post of Secretary of State, and he thought that Mr. Wilson might suggest that "it would be of great service if he would go to Russia at this critical time." Twice again Mr. Wilson asked Colonel House for

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advice about Mr. Bryan, and Colonel House answered the same. "It shows," noted Colonel House, "how distrustful he is of having Mr. Bryan in his Cabinet." At one time they also considered offering Bryan the most important post of ambassador to the Court of St. James's, and Sir Almeric William Fitzroy has recorded in his *Memoirs* that King George, when he heard of this intention, was "very much disturbed."

Finally President-Elect Wilson invited Mr. Bryan to visit Trenton, New Jersey, and he formally offered him the post of Secretary of State. Mr. Bryan was delighted, but there was one little thing he wanted to know from the President before he accepted: Would it be necessary for him to serve intoxicating liquors at his table? President Wilson thought that was a matter for Mr. Bryan to decide as he pleased. Before going to Trenton Bryan had discussed this problem with Mrs. Bryan, and they decided that they could not violate their custom and set a bad example to others, so that it was thought advisable to ask Mr. Wilson beforehand. It was also understood between Mr. Wilson and Mr. Bryan that Mr. Bryan might be permitted to deliver a number of Chautauqua lectures each year. Those questions having been solved, Mr. Bryan accepted the appointment with pleasure.

Meanwhile, Bryan left for Miami, Florida, where he was building a home. Colonel House, who was building the cabinet with President Wilson, visited Bryan at Miami in order to give him an opportunity to offer suggestions of other men who were to be invited into the cabinet, for it was not yet considered advisable to ignore Mr. Bryan's opinions. Colonel House found Mr. Bryan "in a delightful humor," and "as pleased with his new place as a child

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with a new toy. He is really a fine man, full of democratic simplicity, earnest, patriotic, and of a fervently religious nature. Mrs. Bryan is the 'salt of the earth.' She has all the poise and good common sense which is lacking in her distinguished husband."

Mr. Bryan was not at all dictatorial. "He is very earnest in his advice that a Catholic, and perhaps a Jew, be taken into the family," wrote Colonel House. But later Mr. Bryan "was much distressed when I told him that Governor Wilson had offered the Chinese mission to Dr. Charles W. Eliot. He thought it the poorest selection that could be made, for the reason that Eliot was a Unitarian and did not believe in the divinity of Christ and the new Chinese civilization was founded upon the Christian movement there."

Mr. Bryan was very happy at his appointment to the highest office in the gift of the President, but many other people in the country were not so pleased. The wicked eastern newspapers were bitter in their criticism, as usual, and the most charitable of the editorial writers could only regret that Mr. Wilson was compelled by the exigencies of politics to appoint Mr. Bryan. One newspaper remarked, "President Wilson, instead of 'knocking Mr. Bryan into a cocked hat,' knocked him into a silk hat." "I wish our descendants to know," wrote Mrs. Bryan concerning this remark, "that this was by no means the first silk hat in our family. When I first met Mr. Bryan when he was nineteen years old, he was wearing a silk hat as a college boy, and he has had one ever since. When he traveled abroad, he always had his silk hat. At the present writing we have one hat in Japan, one in Old Mexico, and two in London. I make mention of this that all may know that he is not lacking in this emblem of official dignity."

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Mr. Bryan's many admirers telegraphed and wrote their satisfaction with the appointment, and this offset somewhat such criticisms as that of the *New York Sun*: "With all his abilities and possibilities, the Hon. William J. Bryan is about as well fitted to be Secretary of State as a cherub to skate or a merman to play football." Colonel George Harvey wrote a year later: "Somehow we have never been able to circumscribe Mr. Bryan as a mere Secretary of State. We long since came to regard him as a Public Institution such as the English possess in Westminster Abbey and the French in the Arc de Triomphe." And Colonel Harvey described President Wilson's predicament in this manner: "Mr. Bryan, saying no word, withdrew to Florida and inaugurated a period of watchful waiting. While thus engaged he thoughtfully posed for an interesting portrait. At the crucial moment in his deliberations the President-Elect received a copy of the photograph. He studied it intently from all points of view; he scrutinized it closely; he held it arm's length; he presented it to the light; he scanned it sidewise and upside down; he turned its face to the wall and tried to whistle. All in vain. There was no escape from an inexorable fact. No back was strong enough to bear such a burden. Mr. Bryan should be taken to his bosom."

On February 23, 1913, after the appointment had been made public and the criticism had followed, Wilson wrote Bryan the following letter in his own handwriting:

"23 Feb'y, 1913

"Princeton, New Jersey

"My dear Mr. Bryan:

"How contemptible the efforts of the papers are, the last few days, to make trouble for us and between us,—and how

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delightful it is—to me, as I hope it is to you—to know, all the while, how perfect an understanding exists between us! It has been to me, since I saw you, a constant source of strength and confidence.

“I had nothing in particular to write to you about today. I have written these few lines merely by impulse from the heart.

“Mrs. Wilson joins me in warmest messages to Mrs. Bryan and yourself.

“Your sincere friend,

“WOODROW WILSON.

“Hon. Wm. J. Bryan.”

A few days after his inauguration President Wilson asked Colonel House to meet him at the White House at nine in the morning. The offices were deserted, and the President sat at his desk “in a very becoming sack suit of gray, with a light gray silk tie.” “The President suggested,” wrote Colonel House, “that we could have a cypher between us, so when we talked over the telephone or wrote we could discuss men without fear of revealing their identity. He took a pencil and started out with Bryan, saying, ‘Let us call him “Primus.”’ McAdoo is already known as ‘Pythias,’ McCombs being ‘Damon.’ Garrison he suggested as ‘Mars,’ McReynolds ‘Coke,’ Burleson ‘Demosthenes.’ ”

II

On March 4, 1913, William Jennings Bryan found himself at last an important part of the government of the United States. He had spent sixteen years telling the public what he would do and what he would not do, should the people see fit to make him the head of that government.

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Thus far the public had only seen fit to make him a Congressman, and now it was to be his fate to hold the highest post in the cabinet during an administration which established a currency system based on the reverse of the economic ideas which first brought him fame; and he, a confirmed pacifist, was destined to deal with foreign affairs while the world was fighting one of its most extensive wars.

Bryan, whose entire stock in trade thus far in his life had been the airing of his beliefs in public, found it necessary to chain his opinions and actions to diplomatic and political exigencies. As one newspaper expressed it, he was compelled to sit on his crown of thorns. This was not a comfortable position for a man to occupy for more than two years; though he sometimes squirmed slightly, Bryan managed to smile benevolently and to bear it. Many of his old habits had to be given up. For instance, there was the vehicle of his thought and propaganda, *The Commoner*. A few days after Bryan visited Wilson at Trenton, when he was offered the post of Secretary of State, *The Commoner* appeared with a leading editorial headed "The Blight of Seniority." Some Senators were angry at Bryan's expressed views of their prerogatives, and it was feared that he might be speaking for the President. Both Bryan and the President agreed that it might be better if Mr. Bryan retired from the editorial management of *The Commoner* while he was Secretary of State.

Secretary Bryan's first concern was to find jobs for his Democratic friends and supporters, of whom there were enough to fill several governments. At the very first cabinet meeting Bryan was shocked by President Wilson's ideas on this subject. Secretary Houston reported this conversation: "The Postmaster General brought up some of his

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troubles in connection with appointments. He said: 'Mr. President, I shall not present the name of anybody who fought you.' The President did not wait to get exactly what Burleson had in mind. He quickly answered: 'It makes no difference whether a man stood for me or not. All I want is a man who is fit for the place, a man who stands for clean government and progressive policies.' This was a blow straight from the shoulder. It was electrifying. It was only what I expected from Woodrow Wilson. That night, Bryan asked me if I was not shocked by that statement by the President. I said: 'I was not shocked. I was thrilled and pleased.' Burleson evidently had in mind men who had fought the President on personal grounds and who might be personally antagonistic to him. Bryan thought he included Republicans."

But Secretary Bryan was not discouraged, and he made persistent efforts to find places for his political supporters. Secretary Houston wrote in his memoirs: "Bryan is an old-fashioned partisan. If he were President he would flood the departments with his henchmen; and all his friends look alike to him. Each one is equal to every other one. He has no sense of discrimination. His appointments would wreck the government, if it could be wrecked. He smilingly remarked that we need not be surprised if he asked us to find places in our departments for his supporters. He said that he was in a different position from any of us—that 6,000,000 people had voted for him for President three times and many of them would like to serve the nation."

The afternoon of the day of the first cabinet meeting Bryan wrote the Secretary of Agriculture a note asking if he could not find a place in his department for "Coin" Harvey, the man whose book had helped the free-silver

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cause so much in 1896. Secretary Houston had no use for "Coin" Harvey. The anterooms of Bryan's offices in the Department of State were crowded with office-seekers and admirers. Men who happened to be in Washington and who had voted for him in 1896 or in 1900 or in 1908 or in 1896, 1900, and 1908 called to shake his hand, and sometimes they wanted nothing for themselves but had a friend in need. Senator Tillman, Bryan's old friend from 1896, remarked, "The wild asses of the desert are athirst and hungry; they have broken into the green corn."

Just before he was to sail for Turkey to take up his post as Ambassador of the United States, Henry Morgenthau visited Secretary Bryan for his final instructions. "I looked forward to this visit with great expectations," he wrote. But Mr. Bryan had only one request. "Ambassador," he said, "when I made my trip through the Holy Land, I had great difficulty in finding Mount Beatitude. I wish you would try to persuade the Turkish Government to grant a concession to some Americans to build a macadam road up to it, so that other pilgrims may not suffer the inconvenience which I did in attempting to find it."

Mr. Bryan was also very much concerned about the appointment of a minister to China. He still insisted that a good Christian must be sent there. Charles W. Eliot had declined the post, much to Mr. Bryan's relief, for he felt that a Unitarian, no matter how distinguished, would not be able to impress the 400,000,000 Chinese with the virgin birth of Christ and his divine inspiration. Before the inauguration he wrote to President Wilson: "And, while on foreign affairs, let me say that I found our missionary cause embarrassed by the immoralities of American and other representatives of the 'Christian nations.' I suggest for

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your consideration the propriety of selecting men of pronounced Christian character for China and Japan—these nations furnish the most encouraging missionary fields.” And Colonel House was given the task of finding out how orthodox a Christian who was being considered for China really was. Colonel House gave the prospective minister an examination in religion. “He did not seem to have any worth while,” Colonel House recorded, and the appointment was not made.

Secretary Bryan’s carelessness in the award of diplomatic posts was illustrated early in the administration by his offer of the position of Ambassador to Russia to Henry M. Pindell, of Peoria, Illinois. The correspondence of Senator Lewis with Mr. Pindell when it was published caused the first newspaper ridicule of Bryan as Secretary of State. Senator Lewis wrote to Mr. Pindell on August 15, 1913: “The idea of Secretary Bryan is that if you would accept the place of ambassador to St. Petersburg and all the honor which goes with the position, you could resign in a year—say October, 1914. There will be no treaties to adjudicate and no political affairs to bother with, for the administration will see to that for a year. And you would not be tied to St. Petersburg but would have trips to Berlin and Vienna and the other capitals of Europe and all the attendant delights which go with such trips. . . . I think you have a little daughter. Think what it would mean to her all the remainder of her life to say that her father had been Minister to Russia, and of all the honor and prestige that will go with it up to the third and fourth generation.”

Mr. Pindell, however, was reluctant to leave Peoria, and Senator Lewis wrote again later: “If you will accept the position for a year kindly wire me at once. . . . No diplo-

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matic matters will be taken up during your service. . . . But if you accept the position it must be with the understanding that you will resign October 1, 1914." It would have been difficult for Secretary Bryan to keep his promise that Mr. Pindell would have had no diplomatic matters to attend to, for the war of August, 1914, happened along before the agreed time when Mr. Pindell was to renounce the pleasures of travel and to terminate the delight of his little daughter.

But nothing was productive of more embarrassment than Secretary Bryan's letter to his good friend W. W. Vick, who had been sent to Santo Domingo to collect the customs. It was Bryan's admirable ability at coining phrases that did the damage. "Now that you have arrived," he wrote to Mr. Vick, "and are acquainting yourself with the situation, you can let me know what positions you have at your disposal, with which to reward deserving Democrats. Whenever you desire a suggestion from me in regard to a man for any place there, call on me. You have had enough experience in politics to know how valuable workers are when the campaign is on; and how difficult it is to find rewards for all the deserving." "Deserving Democrats" rang through the country for a few days to the mortification of Bryan's friends and the delight of his enemies. "I am not ashamed of it," Bryan said. "The letter was written to an appointive officer whose office was not under the civil service, and the inquiry was made in regard to offices which were not under the civil service."

At about the time when Bryan was seeking jobs for "deserving Democrats" Walter Page wrote from London his first complaint to Colonel House: "The most confidential letter I have written was lost in Washington, and there is

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pretty good testimony that it reached the Secretary's desk. He does not acknowledge the important things, but writes me confidentially to inquire if the office of the man who attends to the mail pouches is not an office into which he might put a Democrat."

Early in his administration Bryan seemed to be falling into publicity hot water. One of the first instances was when he made a speech before a St. Patrick's Day banquet in Washington and declared himself to be in favor of Irish home rule. The English government and press were very angry that the Secretary of State of the United States should thus declare himself. The newspapers reminded Mr. Bryan of his own remarks about the attempted interference of Great Britain in the affairs of the United States. It was particularly indiscreet of Mr. Bryan at the moment, for President Wilson was trying hard to obtain the repeal of the Panama Canal tolls bill from a divided Congress, and he also wished to keep the relations of the United States and Great Britain as friendly as possible so that he might have an easier time solving the Mexican difficulties, in the course of which British subjects were sometimes shot and killed.

Bryan broke into the newspapers throughout the world soon after he took office when he gave a farewell luncheon to Ambassador Bryce and served the diplomats with grape juice and mineral water instead of with wine. Bryan in his *Memoirs* gave this account of what was known as the grape juice incident: "When Mrs. Bryan arranged the table she had a glass for grape juice, not that we thought of drawing a contrast between wine and grape juice, but because the glasses for plain and mineral water looked a little lonesome. At her suggestion, I explained to the

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guests very briefly the reason for our departure from the official custom, and stated that we hoped that our hospitality would be so cordial that the guests would not miss the wine. It was rather an embarrassing occasion to us, because we had no desire to emphasize our views on this subject and I felt quite relieved when the explanation was finished. To my surprise, the guests applauded very heartily and we had no desire to emphasize our views on this subject the newspapers, and a flood of ridicule came down upon Bryan. When they did not like Bryan's policies thereafter many editorial writers referred to them as "grape-juice diplomacy." But Bryan kept up his practice of not serving wine, and those who regarded him as the genial clown of Washington were forced to wait for more amusement at his expense until his announcement of his intention to deliver Chautauqua lectures. And there were no diplomatic difficulties as a result of the serving of grape juice. "The Russian Ambassador," wrote Mrs. Bryan, "told his dinner partner, Mrs. Harrison, that he had not tasted water for years, but as he had been forewarned (Will had told him when we dined there), he had taken his claret before he came and so all was well."

When the newspapers learned that the Secretary of State intended to appear on the lecture platforms of the Chautauqua association, there was another uproar. Was it altogether fitting and proper, they asked President Wilson, for his Secretary of State and their Secretary of State to appear under tents on the same platforms with Austrian yodelers and Swiss bell-ringers? The following was one of the Chautauqua advertisements announcing the Secretary of State and other attractions:

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Ten Big Days

AFTERNOON AND NIGHT—TWENTY RICH, ROYAL
SESSIONS—LITERARY, MUSICAL, ENTERTAINING,
INSTRUCTIVE, DEVOTIONAL, INSPIRATIONAL, AND
LIFE BUILDING—UNDER THE GREAT PAVILION
OUT IN THE OPEN—NEXT TO NATURE'S HEART

New York City Marine Band
Avon Sketch Club
English Opera Quintet
Neapolitan Troubadours
William Jennings Bryan
Elliot A. Boyl
Sears, the Taffy Man
Lorenzo Zwickey
Ed. Amhurst Ott

ADULTS, TWO DOLLARS. CHILDREN, ONE DOLLAR.
COME ONE! COME ALL!

At one of the Chautauqua meetings during his tours Bryan was introduced by Mr. Alexander Harrington, Principal of the High School of Seaford, Maryland, who spoke as follows: "Not words, but deeds—lasting deeds for the uplift of humanity—constitute the record of William Jennings Bryan. Our Secretary of State stands for all that is best and truest in the advancement of civic righteousness. And with such men as William Jennings Bryan directing the affairs of this glorious nation of ours, there will be no place where only darkness reigns, for Mr. Bryan has said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light." Then there was this description of the meeting: "Mr. Bryan appears, accompanied by a boy bearing an immense block of ice. There are two sentiments in the audience—one enthusiasm

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over Mr. Bryan, the other curiosity about the ice. The speaker is clad in black alpaca, and white shirt and collar. Last year, his story was of the 'strategy of privilege' in the Chicago and Baltimore conventions. But his repertory is large, and his various addresses not mutually exclusive throughout. As he continues, the peak of his head glows under the canvas roof, yellow with heat, just over him, and he spreads one hand on the block of ice and then passes the chilled hand slowly over his head again and again. At the end of an hour and a half, Bryan and the ice disappear, and the orchestra resumes with 'Madame Sherry.' "

Bryan was perhaps most completely in his element before a Chautauqua audience. Colonel George Harvey wrote of him: "If Mr. Bryan were asked to designate his favorite hymn, we suspect that he would reply, 'Lead, Kindly Light,' and after that, 'I dwell in tents below, and gladly wander to and fro.' " William James once lectured on the Chautauqua platform, and his letters to his wife give a valuable picture of the intellectual atmosphere: "I've been meeting minds so earnest and helpless that it takes them half an hour to get from one idea to its immediately adjacent next neighbor, and that with infinite creaking and groaning. And when they've got to the next idea, they lie down on it with their whole weight and can get no farther, like a cow on a door-mat, so that you can get neither in nor out with them. Still, glibness is not all. Weight is something, even cow-weight. . . .

"There is hardly a pretty woman's face in the lot, and they seem to have little or no humor in their composition. No *epicureanism* of any sort! . . .

"I see no need of going to Europe when such wonders

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are close by. I breakfasted with a Methodist parson with 32 false teeth, at the X's table, and discoursed of demoniacal possession. The wife said she had my portrait in her bedroom with the words written under it, 'I want to bring a balm to human lives'!!!! Supposed to be a quotation from me!!! After breakfast an extremely interesting lady who has suffered from half-possessional insanity gave me a long account of her case. Life *is* heroic indeed, as Harry wrote. . . .

"The Chautauqua week, or rather six and a half days, has been a real success. I have learned a lot, but I'm glad to get into something less blameless but more admiration-worthy. The flash of a pistol, a dagger, or a devilish eye, anything to break the unlovely level of 10,000 good people—a crime, murder, rape, elopement, anything would do. . . .

"You bet I rejoice at the outlook—I long to escape from tepidity. Even an Armenian massacre, whether to be killer or killed, would seem an agreeable change from the blamelessness of Chautauqua as she lies soaking year after year in her lakeside sun and showers. Man wants to be *stretched* to his utmost, if not in one way then in another!"

And James wrote his brief conclusion to Miss Rosina H. Emmett: "I have seen more women and less beauty, heard more voices and less sweetness, perceived more earnestness and less triumph than I ever supposed possible. Most of the American nation (and probably all nations) is white-trash,—but Tolstoy has borne me up—and I say unto *you*: 'Smooth out your voices if you want to be saved'!!" Mr. Bryan would not have agreed with Professor James, for he was so much like his listeners that there was little except his oratorical personal magnetism to choose between them.

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After his first Chautauqua lecture as Secretary of State, Bryan gave the following statement to the newspaper reporters: "This is my first Chautauqua lecture since becoming a member of the Cabinet. It may not be out of place to say that I find it necessary to lecture in order to supplement the salary which I receive from the Government. As I have lectured for eighteen years, this method of adding to my income is the most natural means to which to turn, and I regard it extremely legitimate. I know of no better audience than the Chautauqua audience. I did not think it improper to go from the Chautauqua platform into a Presidential race, and if I had been elected President I would have thought it no stepping down to return to the Chautauqua platform.

"These meetings enable me to keep in touch with the people. I know of no better opportunity than they offer to present a message worth while to those to whom it is worth presenting."

Bryan's statement that he could not afford to give up lecturing and live as Secretary of State on his salary of \$12,000 a year shocked some of the common people with whom he had associated, and who were ignorant of the cost of living as a cabinet officer in Washington. But Bryan himself must be blamed for their misconception, for it was he more than any one who put into their heads the idea that government officials should not live expensively. In 1905 Mr. Bryan, for example, had written an editorial in *The Commoner* headed "Cabinet Salaries": "The *Chicago Tribune* announces through its Washington correspondent that an effort is to be made in the next congress to raise the salaries of cabinet officers. The complaint is made that the secretaries cannot live in the style they should on the money

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they now receive. Well, that is a matter of opinion. If our country is going to ape the monarchies of the old world and attempt to awe the masses with gorgeous social display then it will be necessary to raise salaries all around. But if government officials are willing to observe the simplicity that befits a republic the present salaries are sufficient. The congressmen and senators who live within their salaries are the best officials in those bodies and it would not be difficult to find competent cabinet officers who could live on cabinet salaries.

"Instead of trying to imitate the extravagance of European officialdom it would be refreshing to see our country set an example in the careful use of public money. Every increase in official salaries tends to lessen the number from which selection can be made. There is a growing tendency to measure men by their incomes—those who give all their time to money-making being ranked higher than those who give part of their time to the public. If an increase in official salaries is made it will be followed by a demand for more higher priced corporation attorneys in the public service—and we have enough now.

"The offices ought not to be taken out of the reach of those who prefer to be known because of their contribution to the world rather than because of the money they have collected from society. The government needs public-spirited, patriotic officials, not men whose souls are bent on growing rich."

After Mr. Bryan got to Washington, he found that the problem was not quite so simple as he had made it when he was sitting in his editorial offices in Lincoln, Nebraska. The *World* offered Mr. Bryan \$8,000 a year if he would remain at his desk instead of lecturing, and the Democrats of Texas

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started to raise a fund for the benefit of the Secretary of State by popular subscription. Senator Bristow introduced a resolution into the Senate in which he detailed the salaries of the Secretaries of State from 1789 to 1911, and then his resolution read:

“Whereas, During this long period of time no one of these eminent statesmen was compelled to neglect the duties of office because of the meagerness of the salary; and

“Whereas, During the year 1911 the salary of the Secretary of State was increased from \$8,000 to \$12,000 per annum; and

“Whereas, the ‘Great Commoner,’ now holding that high office, Honorable W. J. Bryan, has stated in the public press that the salary of \$1,000 per month is not sufficient to enable him to live with comfort, and that because of the meagerness of the salary of \$12,000 per annum he is compelled to neglect the duties of his office and go upon the lecture platform in order to earn a living; and

“Whereas, There are now pending before the Department of State matters of the highest importance to the nation, affecting the relations of our country with Mexico, Japan, England, and other foreign countries, that demand the most earnest, careful and conscientious attention of the Secretary of State; therefore, be it

“Resolved, That the President be requested, if not incompatible with the public interest, to advise the Senate what would be a proper salary to enable the present Secretary of State to live with comfort and to enable him to give his time to the discharge of his public duties, for which he is now being paid the sum of \$1,000 per month; and, be it further

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"Resolved, That the President be respectfully requested to give this subject as prompt attention as his convenience will permit in order that Congress may take immediate steps to relieve the country from the great loss which it suffers by being deprived of the services of the present Secretary of State, though it is now paying for such services at the rate of \$1,000 per month."

Representative Britten, of Illinois, introduced a bill into the House making it a crime punishable by a fine of \$10,000 or imprisonment for two years for a cabinet officer or other high official to lecture for money. Some one in the White House told reporters when they asked for the President's opinion of Secretary Bryan's lecturing activities, "President Wilson isn't worrying about what is said by people who don't mind their own business."

When the news of Bryan's lectures was cabled to Europe, it was enlarged to the appearance of the Secretary of State in a circus instead of on a circuit. The French papers spoke of his music hall activities, the Germans of him as a variety star, and the Russians as a circus performer. "His engagement," said the *Reitch*, of St. Petersburg, "is for twelve nights, and his pay will be \$10,000 a night, exclusive of traveling expenses." And Ambassador Page kept complaining in his letters to Colonel House that his dispatches to the State Department were never answered, that information was given out in Washington which was to be confidential, and that he no longer dared send information to Secretary Bryan. "It's hard to keep my staff enthusiastic under these conditions," he wrote. "While we are thus at work, the only two communications from the Department today are two letters from two of the Secretaries about—presenting 'Democratic' ladies from Texas and Oklahoma at court!"

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And Bryan is now lecturing in Kansas." "I see nothing to do," he added, "but to suggest to the President to put somebody in the Department who will stay there and give intelligent attention to the diplomatic telegrams and letters—some conscientious assistant or clerk. For I hear mutterings, somewhat like these mutterings of mine, from some of the continental embassies. The whole thing is disorganizing beyond description."

President Wilson, however, was not worried. He was content to attend to important things himself, with the advice of Colonel House, and, besides, Mr. Bryan was very useful to him. Colonel House wrote to Ambassador Page in December, 1913: "Of course you know that I only read your letters to him [Wilson]. Mr. Bryan was my guest on Wednesday and I returned to Washington with him but I made no mention of our correspondence and I never have. The President seems to like our way of doing things and further than that I do not care."

III

It must not be supposed that Bryan as Secretary of State did nothing but offer amusement for the Washington correspondents. He worked hard and earnestly to support the ideas of President Wilson and for the furtherance of some of his own heart-felt notions.

One of Bryan's first official duties as Secretary of State, ironically enough, was to order the American Ambassador in Rome to hold funeral services for J. P. Morgan, who had died there. "If Mr. Morgan knew that Mr. Bryan was dallying with his funeral arrangements," wrote Mrs. Bryan, and the thought was so startling that she left it unfinished with

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three dots, and then she added: "The papers took notice of the circumstance."

The first important activity of Secretary Bryan was the part he played in the passage of the Federal Reserve Act, the most important measure of Wilson's first administration. At first Bryan was very much opposed to some of the features of the new currency bill, and he was firm in his opinion that the bankers should not be permitted representation on the Federal Reserve Board, and that the banks should not be permitted to issue bank notes. For a time it looked as if he would resign if the bill was passed with these features in it. President Wilson was worried, and he sent for Tumulty and told him: "It begins to look as if W. J. B. and I have come to the parting of the ways on the Currency Bill. He is opposed to the bank-note feature of the bill as drawn. We had a long discussion about the matter after Cabinet meeting today. In a thoroughly kindly way Mr. Bryan informed me that he was opposed to that feature of the bill. Of course, you know, W. J. B. and I have never been in agreement on the money question. It is only fair, however, to say that in our discussion Mr. Bryan conducted himself in the most generous way, and I was deeply touched by his personal attitude of friendliness toward me. He even went so far as to say that in order that I might not be embarrassed in the handling of the bill, he was willing to resign and leave the country and make no public criticism of the measure. In the meantime, Mr. Bryan has promised to say nothing to any one about the matter until he has a further discussion with me." "The President," wrote Tumulty, "then frankly discussed with me the effect of the possible resignation of Mr. Bryan." He suggested that Tumulty drop in on Bryan and discuss

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the currency question with him casually. Tumulty went to Bryan's house. Bryan was very happy with a new photograph the President had just autographed for him. Bryan then said: "Who from Wall Street has been discussing this bill with the President? I am afraid that some of the President's friends have been emphasizing too much the view of Wall Street in their conferences with the President on this bill." Tumulty assured Bryan that this imputation was wrong, and that the President had not listened to the wicked Wall Street men whom Bryan hated so much. Bryan then convinced Tumulty that some of the provisions of the new currency act violated pledges of the Democratic party's platform. It was finally agreed that the government should issue the Federal Reserve bank notes and not the banks, and Bryan agreed to support the measure. Those who were opposed to the new currency bill thought that they had Bryan on their side, and they were enraged when he made public statements supporting President Wilson's views. An effort was made to revive Mr. Bryan's passionate interest in free silver, but he refused to bite at the bait. Secretary Houston made an interesting statement apropos of the public hearings held by the currency commission created to put the Federal Reserve Act in force, which might serve as some explanation of Bryan's attitude: "One thing was quickly demonstrated, as we suspected it would be; that is, that no one can be an orator sitting down." The Federal Reserve Act matter also served to prove the wisdom of President Wilson's inclusion of Bryan in his cabinet, for if he had been a private citizen, he could have done much damage by public statements concerning his disagreements. A little talk in speeches and a few editorials in *The Commoner* concerning the wicked bankers of Wall Street

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would have made it more difficult for President Wilson to gather the necessary support for his measure, and it was difficult enough for him to do so with Mr. Bryan's support, for the Republicans opposed it out of partisan jealousy or spite, while some Democrats thought it was a surrender to the eastern financial interests. As a matter of fact, it was a democratic measure which Bryan should have supported; its effect was once admirably summed up by Charles A. Beard, who remarked that "the Federal Reserve Act is the greatest measure for raising the small man by his own boot-straps ever devised by the mind of man."

Bryan was really quite ignorant of the financial and economic intricacies behind such measures as the Federal Reserve Act. He had his economic prejudices, which were quite natural, but he had very little understanding of finance or economics. Secretary of Agriculture Houston has this interesting testimonial to Bryan's ignorance in his book, *Eight Years with Wilson's Cabinet*: "It was my custom to keep the President informed of the principal undertakings of the Department of Agriculture and of the course of legislation in the field of rural life. A bill had been introduced in Congress to lend the farmers two billion dollars out of the Treasury at 4 per cent. I mentioned the matter and said that, although it was an unwise measure and class legislation, I was afraid it was making headway. 'Why shouldn't Congress lend the farmers money out of the Treasury at 4 per cent.?' Bryan asked belligerently. 'You have created the National Banking System' (he referred to the National Bank Act) 'in the interest of bankers and lend the bankers money at 2 per cent. Why not lend the farmers money at 4 per cent.?' This would have got a yell from a country audience. I said: 'I seem to have been laboring un-

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der a misapprehension. I understood that the National Bank laws were passed to assure good and safe banking in the interest of the public, and that, not wishing to keep public funds tied up in the Treasury, we permit the banks to take the trouble and go to the expense of keeping them for us subject to withdrawal on demand, and make them pay us 2 per cent. for the trouble.' I then outlined the kind of legislation I thought we should have in the field of rural credits, giving the essentials of a good farm loan act. Bryan sat back in his chair with a satisfied smile. Ten days later, I mentioned the vicious measure again, indicating the terms. Bryan said: 'Why not lend the farmers—' I gave my explanation again and he subsided, apparently pleased. A third time, the same thing occurred. When I finished, Bryan asked me if I would write out my statement for him. I did so that afternoon very carefully, taking four typewritten pages, and sent it over to him by a messenger. In the course of two hours, he called me up and said: 'This is fine. May I use it?' I replied: 'Yes, it is yours. Use it when and where you please.' In due course, I received a marked copy of his paper, *The Commoner*, and I found my statement printed as his leading editorial, which was all right. I felt that I had done a good job, an educational one. I had the thing nailed down.

"I was too optimistic. At the next meeting of the Cabinet, when the matter came up again, and I stated that it had made progress, Bryan chirped up with: 'Why not—?' I said: 'Good Lord!' and gave it up."

The other outstanding activities of Secretary Bryan before the outbreak of the European war were concerned with Japan, Mexico, and the negotiation of arbitration treaties with the leading nations of the world.

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Soon after the Wilson administration came into office, it looked very much as if Japan and the United States would have serious difficulties over the laws passed by the State of California discriminating against Japanese subjects. President Wilson requested Secretary Bryan to visit California and use his influence and oratory to persuade the Californian legislators to treat Japan gently. Bryan made the trip and his influence did some good. He also carried on numerous diplomatic conversations with the Japanese Ambassador in Washington, most of which came to nothing but *impasses*. When the Japanese Ambassador rose and asked if what Secretary Bryan had just said was his final word—Secretary Bryan has not informed us what he did say—Bryan with an unctuous smile said, “Nothing is final between friends,” and the Japanese Ambassador sat down and discussed some more until finally an agreement was reached. Bryan always believed that it was this kindly word of his which saved the day, but may it not be possible that the Imperial Japanese Government did not feel itself strong enough at the moment to risk anything final? Bryan told Secretary Houston: “There will be no war. I have seen the Japanese Ambassador, and I am letting the old man down easy.”

Although Secretary Bryan was an ardent pacifist, he did not seem to think pacifism so necessary with our southern American neighbors as he did with the nations of Europe. Bryan always adopted the prevalent patronizing attitude that we, a stronger nation, adopt toward those who are compelled to accept it, though Bryan would have been the first to deny he felt such patronization. However, his speech welcoming the delegates to the Pan-American Financial Conference reeks with it. He told the delegates

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his "one thought" concerning the occasion. "It is," he said, "the idea that we are neighbors." Then he patted his guests on the head in this fashion: "May I not describe these Republics as resembling a great banyan tree? The United States is the parent stem; the branches, extending to the south, have taken root in the soil and are now permanent supports—yes, important parts, of that great tree." It never occurred to Bryan that the South American republics might fancy themselves as beautiful, though smaller, independent trees in an adjoining grove.

In the course of the diplomatic difficulties caused by the unsettled state of affairs in Mexico, Bryan showed himself quite willing to use force, though he had made the statement that if he had his way, he would cease to build battle-ships and instead would build two great peace ships and call them *Friendship* and *Fellowship*. However, when Mexicans began to indicate that they would behave as they pleased and would not take any special pains to protect the lives of Americans and other foreign residents, Bryan agreed with the President's determination to send an army and part of the navy to Mexico. Mr. Tumulty gives this picture in his book on Woodrow Wilson: "About 2:30 o'clock in the morning of the twenty-first day of April, 1914, the telephone operator at the White House called me at my home, and rousing me from bed, informed me that the Secretary of State, Mr. Bryan, desired to speak to me at once upon a very urgent and serious matter. I went to the telephone and was informed by Mr. Bryan that he had just received a wireless informing him that the German steamship *Ypirango*, carrying munitions, would arrive at Vera Cruz that morning about ten o'clock and that he thought the President ought to be notified and that, in his opinion, drastic meas-

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ures should at once be taken to prevent the delivery of these munitions to the Customs House at Vera Cruz. While Mr. Bryan and I were talking, Mr. Daniels, the Secretary of the Navy, got on the wire and confirmed all that Mr. Bryan had just told me. Soon the President was on the 'phone, and in a voice indicating that he had just been aroused from sleep, carried on the following conversation with Messrs. Bryan, Daniels, and myself: Mr. Bryan reported to him the situation at Vera Cruz and informed him of the receipt of the wireless:

" 'Mr. President, I am sorry to inform you that I have just received a wireless that a German ship will arrive at Vera Cruz this morning at ten o'clock, containing large supplies of munitions and arms for the Mexicans, and I want your judgment as to how we shall handle the situation.'

"Replying to Mr. Bryan, the President said: 'Of course, Mr. Bryan, you understand what drastic action in this matter might ultimately mean in our relations with Mexico?'

"Mr. Bryan said, by way of reply:

" 'I thoroughly appreciate this, Mr. President, and fully considered it before telephoning you.' For a second there was a slight pause and then the President asked Mr. Daniels his opinion in regard to the matter. Mr. Daniels frankly agreed with Mr. Bryan that immediate action should be taken to prevent the German ship from landing its cargo. Without a moment's delay the President said to Mr. Daniels:

" 'Daniels, send this message to Admiral Fletcher: "Take Vera Cruz at once." ' "

When, however, the Mexican difficulties were finally settled and President Huerta left Mexico, this scene took

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place, according to Mrs. Bryan, at a birthday party held for Secretary Lane: "When Secretary McAdoo came, Will told him of the retirement of Huerta. They embraced and danced about like a pair of boys."

That Secretary Bryan was not incapable of dramatic excitement and warlike fervor during some of the events of his administration is also indicated by an anecdote told by Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was then Assistant Secretary of the Navy. One day Secretary Bryan rushed into Mr. Roosevelt's office and said: "Roosevelt, I want a battleship sent at once to Santo Domingo. I have a dispatch which shows a serious condition there, and I must have a battleship within twenty-four hours." "It's a physical impossibility, Mr. Secretary," Roosevelt explained. "There isn't a battleship within five days' sail of Santo Domingo." "But I must have one at once," Bryan insisted. "There are no battleships in those waters," Roosevelt said. "It will take twenty-four hours to coal a battleship for such a voyage. I could get a cruiser there from Guantanamo, and that is the best I can do at present." "I know nothing about the difference in ships," Bryan said impatiently. "When I said battleship I meant a ship with officers and guns and sailors. That is what I want."

But in spite of these minor flurries of excitement caused by the exigencies of his office in dealing with the weak nations of South America, Bryan's main interest while he was Secretary of State was the negotiation of treaties of peace, and he took great pride in his accomplishments in that direction. We have already seen that Bryan was interested in world peace when he went traveling around the world, and as early as 1905 in the columns of *The Commoner* he advocated applying the principles of labor arbitra-

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tion to international affairs. In London he had delivered an oration on the subject. But now that he was Secretary of State of the United States he saw the opportunity to carry his ideas to application. For years his own favorite oration had been his own "Prince of Peace," and now at last he had the chance to make his gospel law. "This is the day for which the ages have been waiting," he wrote in his book, *Heart to Heart Appeals*. "For nineteen hundred years the gospel of the Prince of Peace has been making its majestic march around the world, and during these centuries the philosophy of the Sermon on the Mount has become more and more the rule of daily life. It only remains to lift that code of morals from the level of the individual and make it real in the law of nations, and this, I believe, is the task that God has reserved for the United States." It was characteristic of Mr. Bryan throughout his lifetime to believe that what he wished true was true.

The leading contribution of Bryan's peace treaties was that they required each nation which was a party to one of them to agree to wait one year after an international question arose before declaring hostilities against another nation which was a party to a Bryan treaty. During this year a commission of five members, in which each of the contending parties was represented by a member of its own choice, was to investigate the justice of the controversy. The report of the commission was not binding on the parties, but it was hoped that facts would be brought out during such investigation, and that the opportunity offered for "cooling off," as Mr. Bryan expressed it, was invaluable. Also the force of public opinion throughout the world might be with the party for whom the investigation commission decided.

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Soon after he took office Bryan got busy and drafted his treaties, and with the approval of President Wilson and the cabinet they were presented to the foreign diplomats in Washington. Bryan also conferred concerning them with the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, so that no tender feelings might be hurt. Then, on April 24, 1913, all the diplomats gathered in Mr. Bryan's office at the Department of State. He presented each one with an outline of his plan for peace, and he told them all a story: "A man was complaining to a friend that he found it impossible to drink moderately, because of the numerous invitations which he received from others. The friend, to whom the complaint was made, suggested to him that the difficulty might be remedied by calling for sarsaparilla whenever he found that he had all the whiskey he wanted. 'But,' said the complainant, 'that is the trouble; when I get all the whiskey I want I cannot say sarsaparilla.'" And then Mr. Bryan assured the diplomats: "It is difficult for a nation to say 'investigate' when it is angry." Thus Mr. Bryan killed two of his favorite birds with one stone, war and drink. The diplomats all went home better men and sent communications to their governments. Then Bryan negotiated the treaties separately with each nation which wished to be a party to one of them. Salvador was the first country to consent, and then Guatemala, Panama, Honduras, and Nicaragua signed Bryan treaties. The Netherlands signed quickly, for there was no reason why they should not. Then Brazil, Argentina, and Chile signed on July 24, 1914. A few days later one of the greatest wars in history broke out in Europe, but France and Great Britain, though they were very busy fighting with Germany, signed treaties with Bryan, and they were soon joined by China and Spain.

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Russia came in in October, 1914. But Germany and Austria-Hungary, though they expressed their polite approval of Mr. Bryan's plans, declined to sign his treaties. These nations had just recently been publicly embarrassed by their signatures to a treaty guaranteeing the inviolability of Belgium, which treaty they had found it inconvenient to respect. Belgium also did not sign, for she was apparently sick to death of broken treaties. Japan also did not sign, because she could not tell when she might find it necessary to fight for recognition by the United States of her equality with other nations, and a year was considered a long time to wait in case of an emergency.

In Bryan's treaties there was a clause providing that during the one-year period of investigation the contracting parties agreed not to increase their military or naval programs, unless they were meanwhile menaced by a third party, and that they must write each other confidentially and tell each other of their intentions. But the Senate of the United States thought that such a provision might sometime prove too embarrassing to this country, so that clause was stricken out before the treaties were ratified.

Thus when all the ceremonies were completed—they included a formal signing, with moving-pictures, by Bryan and the ambassadors, and the unveiling in the State Department of an oil painting of Bryan holding one of his treaties—the actual accomplishment was slight, for treaties were negotiated only with those countries with whom there was little likelihood that the United States would be involved in difficulties. No treaties were signed with Germany or Japan, with whom it was likely that the United States might become involved in disputes. But no harm was done, and Mr. Bryan's pleasant efforts set up machinery

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and precedents which might some day prove of practical value.

After the ceremonies Bryan, with a characteristic touch, sent each of the diplomats at Washington a paperweight made for him by the Navy Yard out of melted swords. The paperweights were in the form of ploughshares, and on the beam of the plow was Bryan's genial sentence to the Japanese Ambassador: "Nothing is final between friends." On the blade of the plow was the familiar quotation from Isaiah 2:4, one of Bryan's favorites: "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares." On Christmas Day, 1914, Secretary Bryan sent to all the ambassadors and ministers copies of his brochure, *The Message from Bethlehem*.

Bryan was satisfied with his work. He wrote in his book, *Heart to Heart Appeals*: "I have such faith in these treaties that I believe that a thousand years from now the name of Woodrow Wilson and my name will be linked together in these treaties in the capitals of the world and that these treaties will preserve the peace of our nation by furnishing machinery by which peace can be preserved with honor." In May, 1913, Secretary Bryan said in his speech at the celebration of the Treaty of Ghent establishing long-continued peace between Great Britain and the United States: "I made up my mind before I accepted the offer of the Secretaryship of State that I would not take the office if I thought there was to be war during my tenure. When I say that I am confident that I shall have no cause to change my view, for we know no cause today that cannot be settled better by reason than by war. I believe there will be no war while I am Secretary of State, and I believe there will be no war so long as I live. I hope we have seen the last great war."

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Early in 1914 Secretary Bryan contemplated a trip to Europe to urge by force of oratory on the nations of that continent universal peace. Walter Page in London was fidgety. He wrote to Colonel House that it "would take years for the American Ambassador to recover what they'll lose if he carries out his plan." He also wrote to House: "I have your note about Willum J. . . . Crank once, crank always. My son, never tie up with a crank." And when Lord Oxford—then Mr. Asquith—said to Mr. Page with a smile that the Secretary of State was "a peculiar product of your country," the American Ambassador was not displeased with the remark. On January 8, 1914, Page wrote to Colonel House: "Mrs. Page has learned something more about Secretary Bryan's proposed visit here in the spring. He's coming to talk his peace plan which, you know, is a sort of grape-juice arbitration—a distinct step backward from a real arbitration treaty. Well, if he comes with *that*, when you come to talk about reducing armaments, you'll wish you'd never been born. Get your ingenuity together, then, and prevent that visit." Colonel House prevented it, for meanwhile he and President Wilson were worried about the possibility of a war in Europe, and Colonel House planned a visit to Earl Grey, the Kaiser, and M. Briand, to see what could be done about universal peace, and they did not think it necessary to mention the matter to the Secretary of State, who was so busy with his own arbitration treaties and his lectures as well as the demands for patronage. And then war broke out in Europe in the summer of 1914, and all plans for peace were put off for some years.

But Mr. Bryan did not sense that he was a figurehead Secretary of State. He admired President Wilson greatly.

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He admired especially the ease with which the President could handle words, and he was frequently in the habit of taking his notes to foreign governments to the President for his final revision. In one of his Bible sermons delivered in 1924 Bryan said: "A word as to John's loyalty to Christ: it is a test of a man's character when he yields to a superior successor. . . . Because of the intensity of his nature and the depth of his convictions he might have been inclined to magnify his own importance and to resent competition had he been relying on his own judgment or ability, but John was under no delusion as to his mission. He knew that he was not the expected Messiah, but only the messenger sent to prepare the way—'*A voice crying in the wilderness.*'"

IV

Life went on serenely and busily for Secretary Bryan. The newspapers, it was true, were sometimes nasty, but he and Mrs. Bryan had pleasant times. Secretary Bryan and his wife were spending a few days in 1914 at Asheville, North Carolina, and Mrs. Bryan wrote in her diary: "We had breakfast at 7:30 and left promptly on the dot of eight for the mountains by automobile. We took Will's axes and our book, some fruit and heavy gloves, etc., and a pitcher of water and a kitchen chair for Mr. Seeley's house on Sunset Mountain. We left the car at an unfrequented spot where the view down the valley is particularly lovely. Mr. Bryan then laid 'aside every weight' in the form of coat and vest and began to cut down a tree. I sat near and read aloud from Trevelyan's 'Life of John Bright.' When he stopped to rest, we discussed John Bright and the Corn Laws, the conditions of the working people at that time, etc. While Will was dragging away the brush which he threw into the

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ravine, I worked on my hemstitching, which I kept on my lap. At noon a lunch was brought up to us from the hotel. . . . In the afternoon we chopped and read, or else took a long walk, once or twice walking all the way back to the hotel. . . . Another day we spent much time gathering chestnuts, which were just beginning to drop. . . . We usually reached the hotel at dark, slipped quietly to our rooms, had a good dinner served there, sent telegrams, read the papers, and went to bed." In Washington Bryan rose before seven every morning and went for a horseback ride.

Then the war in Europe came along, distressing everybody and filling all with anxiety. Bryan became feverishly busy and terribly anxious. He had predicted that there would be no war while he was Secretary of State, and now he was determined that at least for America there should be none while he held that important post. Bryan admired President Wilson's numerous notes to foreign powers demanding respect for the rights of Americans, and he signed them. But months went by and the foreign powers found it necessary in the course of their war to destroy the lives and interfere with the property of American citizens, and Mr. Bryan became more and more worried and more and more determined that there must be no war while he was Secretary of State. But Mr. Bryan began to realize that in spite of all his efforts, America was drifting slowly but surely into war, and the realization made him lose sleep, weight, and peace of mind. Mrs. Bryan wrote of this period: "Cabinet meeting day had become a hard day for Mr. Bryan. More than once he came home with bloodshot eyes and weary steps, and said words to this effect: 'Mary, what does the President mean! *Why* can't he see that by keeping open the way for mediation and arbitration, he has an op-

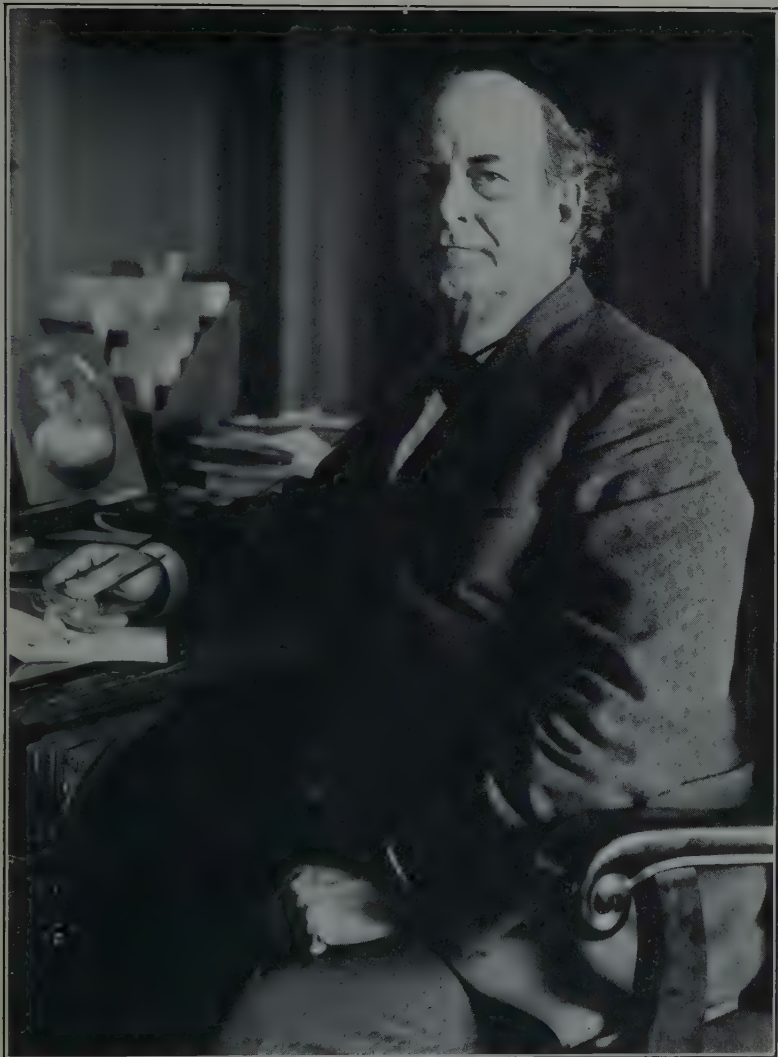


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THE SECRETARY OF STATE

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portunity to do the greatest work man can do! I cannot understand his attitude.'

"As the days wore on his sleep became broken. He would lie awake three and four hours at a time, tossing, jotting down memoranda for next day's work, etc. Upon such occasions I sometimes persuaded him to take a hot bath, to eat something light, to count monotonously—all the sleep-inducing remedies I knew, but without much result."

And then when Mr. Bryan got to his office there were all kinds of petty annoyances. There were, for example, the newspaper men. Oswald Garrison Villard, who was writing in Washington for his own newspaper at the time, visited Bryan's office many times to get news, and these were his impressions: "Never in my journalistic career have I seen anything as pitiful as Mr. Bryan in his daily conference with newspaper men. One blushed to be of the profession when one listened to the deliberate and studied effort of some of the correspondents to ask Mr. Bryan impertinent and embarrassing questions, some of which could no more be answered than the famous one as to whether you had stopped beating your wife. Needless to say no one ever thought of asking such questions of Mr. Wilson or of the other important members of the Cabinet. The Hearst journalists were the worst offenders, and as Mr. Bryan stood in the Secretary of State's office, trying to ward off these snapping wolves of the press, I could only think of him as an old, nearly worn-out and very shaggy buffalo trying to drive away the pack by much lowering of his head, and many menacing lunges. Unfortunately, Mr. Bryan had laid himself open to these attacks, for though there was a time in his earlier life when he thought that no one should amass, or be allowed to amass, more than a hundred

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thousand dollars, he was eager for money, and would therefore not give up his public speaking for a price. It had been for so many years the very breath of his nostrils; he hungered so for the excitement of the platform and the thrill of the applause which he received that he could not abandon going the rounds of the nearby Chautauquas. . . . He was inordinately proud of the large sums he made by an evening's talk, and was not unhappy that it was known that he received \$400 or \$600 or \$800 for single appearances.

"So it was the habit of the malicious journalists to begin the daily newspaper conferences by asking Mr. Bryan: 'Well, Mr. Secretary, what is the arrangement tonight, \$300 and half the gate money, or fifty-fifty straight?' This would be varied by asking him whether he would appear between the Swiss bell-ringers and the world's greatest saxophone artist, or whether he would follow the Siamese jugglers upon the program. Try as he would, Mr. Bryan could not stop these impertinences; sometimes the questions obviously flattered him. Then there would follow diabolical inquiries, cleverly framed to make him betray the secrets of his Department, whether he answered yes or no.

"His final interview with the correspondents was pathetic to a degree. Said he: 'I have been like an old hen with a lot of chicks. The chicks were my secrets, which I tried to keep under my wings, while you were trying to get them away from me.' It was hard for the men to keep their countenances, it was such a perfect description of what had been going on. None the less, they did, and all of the earnest men who were there felt a real touch of sorrow on parting with him, just as did his fellow members of the Cabinet."

There were distressing leaks in the Department of State

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and elsewhere, and for most of these Bryan was blamed, even when he did not deserve it. In London Walter Page, an ambassador who accepted the British situation without any reference whatever to the opinions or state of mind of his own country, screamed his disgust with Mr. Bryan's incompetence and carelessness. In Washington the situation was hardly better. The British Ambassador, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, was constantly on edge, because the views of his own government were not those of the government to which he was accredited. When Colonel House visited Sir Cecil, he found him very irritable. He said that "it was impossible to conduct diplomatic negotiations of a delicate nature through the newspapers," and he expressed his intention to remain away from the State Department altogether because of the premature and garbled publication of the President's note to Great Britain protesting against the holding up of neutral vessels. "He had no doubt," wrote Colonel House, "we would all be pro-Germans within six months, that the Germans were strong and had a thorough organization, and they would finally break down any anti-German sentiment which now existed. . . . He talked so many different ways, in almost the same sentence, that I concluded he was too upset for me to have any profitable discussion with him, and I therefore took my leave." Colonel House investigated and discovered that the Department of State was not to blame for the premature publication. Colonel House's papers also indicate that France's Ambassador, Jusserand, had "an extremely bad case of nerves at present, and the Russian Ambassador was a reactionary of the worst type and was little less than mad." It is no wonder that Secretary of State Bryan found it hard to sleep at nights.

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Bryan found it impossible to understand why there should be war. It was his old failing of imagining conditions to be as he wished them to be that prevented his mind from grasping any view of conditions as they were. He firmly believed, and said so many times, that if the necessity arose a million armed defenders would spring up in America overnight, and therefore he was opposed to preparedness for war. He did not say where they would spring from, nor did he bother about how they would get their arms. He, he said, had faith in the heart of the American people. "The President knows," Bryan said in a public statement, "that if this country needed a million men, and needed them in a day, the call would go out at sunrise and the sun would go down on a million men in arms." It was a pretty picture for an insurance calendar, and it was hopeless to argue against it. Colonel House tried, and he came to this conclusion: "He talked as innocently as my little grandchild, Jane Tucker. He spoke with great feeling, and I fear he may give trouble." Bryan also believed that by Christian forbearance he could change the heart of the German people. He wrote in his book *In His Image*: "A man can be born again; the springs of life can be cleansed instantly so that the heart loves the things that it formerly hated and hates the things that it once loved. If this is true of *one*, it can be true of *any number*. Thus, a nation can be born in a day if the ideals of the people can be changed."

The result was that Bryan was distrusted at home and abroad as a practical influence, and any plan for peace or mediation which was suspected of originating with him or with which he was suspected of being associated in any way immediately received contempt and ridicule. Colonel

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House wrote to President Wilson when the President contemplated offering his services as a mediator in the European war and suggested that if he did so it should be made perfectly clear that he did so on his own and not with Mr. Bryan's coöperation. This letter was dated as early as August 5, 1914, and Mr. Bryan's influence steadily decreased. Colonel House said in his letter: "I hate to harp upon Mr. Bryan, but you cannot know as I do how he is thought of in this connection. You and I understand better and know that the grossest sort of injustice is done him. Nevertheless, just now it is impossible to make people think differently."

Another thing which Bryan could not understand was why the diplomatic negotiations with England should not be just as firm as those with Germany. There was some abstract justice in his point of view, but, sentimentalist as he was, he refused to discriminate between lives and property. He had not forgotten his Cross of Gold speech, and he had talked so often since about the perfidy of Albion that he had convinced himself of his own sinister vision. Once at a cabinet meeting he broke out and accused the cabinet of being pro-Ally. President Wilson fixed him with a stony eye and rebuked him sternly for the accusation. Bryan apologized.

Then, in May, 1915, the *Lusitania* was sunk by a German submarine. Mrs. Bryan wrote in her diary: "The evening we had word of the sinking of the *Lusitania* we were dining out. Coming home, Mr. Bryan said: 'I wonder if that ship carried munitions of war? I will have Lansing investigate that! If she did carry them, it puts a different phase on the whole matter! England has been using our citizens to protect her ammunition!' Lansing the next day

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had the clearance papers examined and reported ammunition on board. There is a ruling under international law, permitting ships to carry small ammunition, but, as Will said, cartridges, as well as bombs and shrapnel, were made to kill men. From that time Mr. Bryan took the position that, in order to maintain strict neutrality, we must send a note to England protesting against her interference with our shipping as well as one to Germany for destroying the *Lusitania*."

This was not the view of President Wilson, but Bryan almost succeeded in having his views followed, partially. Bryan persuaded Wilson that America did not want war, and that Germany should be given another chance. He suggested that simultaneously with the first note of President Wilson to Germany concerning the *Lusitania* case a postscript should be sent to Ambassador Gerard in Germany advising him of the willingness of the United States government to submit the questions to a commission of investigation as suggested in the Bryan peace treaties. This supplementary instruction, it was said, was drafted and ordered to be telegraphed. Robert Lansing, who was then counselor of the Department of State, saw the telegram just before it was to be transmitted, and he thought that it would be a great mistake to weaken the case of the United States by expressing a willingness to arbitrate, when the President's note stated that "the Imperial German Government will not expect the Government of the United States to omit any word or act." Pressure was brought to bear upon President Wilson by members of the cabinet as soon as they heard of the supplementary instruction, and the telegram was ordered not to be sent. Bryan signed the first note to Germany concerning the *Lusitania*

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case, "because it was the opening statement of our position and simply called for a similar statement on the part of Germany," Mrs. Bryan noted in her diary.

Then Germany's Foreign Minister, Zimmermann, came to lunch at the American Embassy in Berlin. After his customary two quarts of Moselle, he told the American lady who was sitting next to him that there would be no trouble with America, because he had information that the United States was not serious in the *Lusitania* matter. The American lady told Ambassador Gerard, who called on Zimmermann and demanded the source of his information. Zimmermann, wishing to call what he felt to be Gerard's bluff, pulled out a cable from Dr. Constantin Dumba, the Ambassador of Austria-Hungary to Washington, which said that he had it from Mr. Bryan himself that the President's strong words about the *Lusitania* sinking were largely for home consumption and were not the final word. "Nothing is final between friends." Gerard did not know just what to do. If he cabled the State Department, the cable went to Mr. Bryan. And so he cabled to Colonel House, the invaluable intermediary, over the head of Bryan, between the ambassadors abroad and the President in Washington.

When Bryan was informed of the situation, he asked Ambassador Dumba to call at his office, and he cabled Ambassador Gerard to inform the German government that nothing was said by Mr. Bryan to Dr. Dumba that would justify such a cable as Zimmermann had showed to Gerard. Then there was a period of hurried attempts to save face. But it did turn out from the correspondence that Bryan had said to Dr. Dumba that the note of the President was couched in friendly terms, and that it was to be hoped that Germany would answer in the same spirit. And Dr.

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Dumba's cable, a copy of which is among Bryan's papers in the Library of Congress, said: "The American protest, which, with regard to the high waves of indignation roused in American public opinion by destruction of so many lives, was bound to be more energetic than that of the thirtieth of March address to England, is yet kept in a friendly tone, and he [Mr. Bryan] hopes for an answer in the same friendly tone and spirit." This statement could easily be translated into the language of conversation as a statement that the firm note of President Wilson was merely "a sop to public opinion." However, Secretary Bryan was formally exonerated, and Dr. Dumba was given his passports and dismissed from Washington. Germany, feeling that the United States would never go to war, answered President Wilson's note noncommittally, and the President decided to send another note early in June, 1915.

During the weeks between the first and the second *Lusitania* notes Bryan was under great mental strain. He saw the United States drifting into war, and he did not see how to prevent it, and he could not consent to help bring it about. At the cabinet meeting on June 1 he sat in his chair at the President's right hand with his eyes closed. Bryan maintained that the second *Lusitania* note as President Wilson had drafted it left Germany no chance except to discontinue submarine warfare, and he still thought that Germany should be given an opportunity to express willingness to arbitrate the question. "It is virtually placing the power to declare war in the hands of another nation," he said.¹

Between the cabinet meeting on Tuesday and that on the next Friday Bryan told the President that he could not

¹ *The Memoirs of William Jennings Bryan*, by himself and his wife, p. 422.

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sign his second *Lusitania* note. The President was surprised when Mr. Bryan added that he did not feel that he could remain in the cabinet. On Friday after the cabinet meeting Mrs. Bryan met her husband as he was driving home in his carriage, and they went home together. Bryan lay down during the afternoon, but he could not sleep, and that night he tossed and remained awake. "He told me," wrote Mrs. Bryan, "what it would mean, how he would be abused, vilified, and misrepresented, but he said: 'If I wait until this note goes and a curt rejoinder is returned, it will then be too late. The President evidently feels he is voicing the sentiment of the country. I feel sure there are comparatively few Americans who want our country to be involved in this cataclysm. If I resign now, I believe it will be possible to bring the real sentiments of the people to the surface. The President may then feel at liberty to take steps which he now feels are unwise to take.'"

On Saturday morning Bryan went to his office. Mrs. Bryan was worried about him and thought that a week-end in the country was imperative, and she arranged to go to the home of their friend Senator Blair Lee at Silver Spring, where there was a beautiful old magnolia tree, under which they used to sit and read. Bryan did not want to go, for fear the President might wish to see him, but Secretary McAdoo, the President's son-in-law, assured Mrs. Bryan that the President would not need Mr. Bryan over the week-end. "Mr. Bryan then consented to go," wrote Mrs. Bryan, "and twilight found us listening to the good-night song of birds. We were beyond the reach of newspaper men." They were in bed for eleven hours, "of which Mr. Bryan slept four." Mrs. Bryan suggested that he read, and he took from his hand bag a book published in 1829 called *A Wreath of*

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Appreciation of Andrew Jackson. Sunday night Mrs. Bryan gave her weary husband a sleeping-powder.

On Monday morning Bryan had a conference with Secretary McAdoo, the only member of the cabinet to whom he had told his intention of resigning. Bryan also saw the President. They talked for an hour, at the end of which time President Wilson, calm and silent, pressed a button. "Mr. Bryan wants a drink of water," said the President. When it was brought, Bryan's hand shook as he drank it. That night Bryan sent the President his resignation.

The cabinet met on Tuesday, June 8, 1915, and Bryan was absent. There was some discussion of the President's second note to Germany, which had not yet been sent. The President was interrupted by a message. "Gentlemen," he said, "Mr. Bryan has resigned as Secretary of State to take effect when the German note is sent. He is on the telephone and wants to know whether it would be desirable or agreeable for him to attend the cabinet meeting. Would it be embarrassing? What do you think?" All the members of the cabinet agreed that it would not embarrass them. Bryan came in a few minutes later. The cabinet members stood up solemnly. Then the discussion was resumed. "Bryan," wrote Secretary Houston, "looking exhausted and appearing to be under a great emotional strain, leaned back in his chair with his eyes closed." After the meeting Bryan invited the cabinet members to lunch at the University Club. Some of them accepted. He told them that he could not "go along with" the President in this note, because he thought it might lead to war. "I think I can help the President more on the outside," he said. "I can work to control popular opinion so that it will not exert

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pressure for extreme action which the President does not want. We both want the same thing, Peace."

That evening Bryan's resignation was made public. "There were great interest and excitement on all sides," wrote Secretary Houston, "the greatest, perhaps, since our arrival in Washington." People wondered what could be in the second note to Germany, and there was a breathless interval until the publication of that note. It was discovered that the second note was milder than the first. Bryan told Attorney-General Gregory, who told Colonel House, that President Wilson had taken out a sentence mitigating the tone of the note before Bryan resigned and had put back the softer sentence after his resignation. Gregory maintained that this was not the truth, that the entire note as sent to Germany was discussed at the last cabinet meeting. "This is also the President's recollection," wrote Colonel House.

There was a storm of abuse in the newspapers against Bryan as soon as the editorial writers all over the country got time to express their opinions. Many of the newspapers maintained that Bryan's action was disloyal: "Unspeakable treachery, not only to the President, but to the nation," said the *New York World*. "He will go back to his first love, agitation," remarked the *Montgomery, Alabama, Advertiser*. "Billy Sunday in the wrong niche," wrote the *Syracuse Post-Standard*. "Amazement and contempt for him grow," said the *Rochester Post-Express*. Theodore Roosevelt, then a journalist, wrote to his friend Henry Cabot Lodge, still a Senator, "It is possible that Wilson, who is the worst President by all odds we have had since Buchanan with the possible exception of Andrew Johnson, may find that his break with Bryan is of more permanent hurt to

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him than anything else." "Mr. Bryan's official career is ended," wrote Colonel Harvey with relief; "that he will continue to exist as a public nuisance must be assumed, but the plaster cast which serves as a frontispiece for this Review is a political death-mask."

But Mr. Bryan's friends welcomed him back to Lincoln, Nebraska. His brother "Charlie," now mayor, received him officially. A crowd of six thousand listened to Bryan that night on "The Farmer's Interest in Peace." He congratulated the people of Nebraska on living thirty-six hours from New York "and said the Allegheny Mountains are the salvation of the rest of the country, as they serve as a dike to keep the prejudice, the venom, the insolence, and the ignorance of the New York press from inundating the Mississippi Valley." After a reception at the Governor's house, the Bryans went to Fairview. Mrs. Bryan was distressed to find that weeds were running wild in the garden and the place was going to seed.

There was one little matter Bryan still wished to settle in Washington: he wanted to purchase the desk at which he had sat as Secretary of State. His wish was gratified, and the press of the East had another subject of ridicule. "So he could not part with it," said the *New York Times*, "and he took it away from the scenes in which Seward and Fish and Evarts and Hay thought more reverent to leave it, and carried it off to Fairfield County, Nebraska, to repose among the souvenirs of his visit to Japan, and the sea-shells and snapshots, and the original drawings of cartoons in the hall, and the curious specimens of Oriental weaving in the sitting-room, and the copy of *The First Battle* on the center-table." The *New York Times* in 1914 had asked the Secretary of State for his favorite quotation from Shakespeare.

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He answered: "There are so many good things in Shakespeare that it is hard to pick out one passage and give it preëminence; but I do not recall just now any bit of advice more useful or more felicitously expressed than the following:

"To thine own self be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.'"

CHAPTER VII

KEEPING THE LIMELIGHT BURNING

THE ACTIVITIES of William Jennings Bryan from the time of his resignation as Secretary of State until the time of his death are explained somewhat by the statement of Edgar Lee Masters, who wrote, "He is the Christian Statesman, out of a job." Bryan had spent his early life using his religion as part of his politics, and when his political control finally waned with the election of Woodrow Wilson as the first Democratic President since 1892, Bryan spent the rest of his life injecting politics into religion and *vice versa*, using the methods of conventions and campaigns to further ideas and plans which he regarded as spiritual. It was he, perhaps, more than any one else in the United States who taught clergymen how to lobby for peace, prohibition, and the Bible. In his famous lecture, "The Prince of Peace," Bryan offered the best criticism possible of these activities: "A man has an idea which he thinks is good; he tells his neighbors about it and they do not like it. This makes him angry; he thinks it would be so much better for them if they would like it, and, seizing a club, he attempts to make them like it. But one trouble about this rule is that it works both ways; when a man starts out to compel his neighbors to think as he does, he generally finds them willing to accept the challenge and they spend so much time trying to coerce each other that they have no time left to do each other good."

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During the summer of 1915 President Wilson was still making an effort to keep the United States out of the war, but, imperceptibly, they were drawing nearer and nearer to war. Bryan in his own way was trying to keep the nation out of any war. A few months after he resigned, he visited the San Francisco Exposition and spoke on peace to thousands of people. Mrs. Bryan wrote in her diary: "These days are full of trains and changing cars and small hotels and crowds and shouts and rain and wind and auto rides across country. He has been making two speeches daily. It is hard work. One night when he was very tired, he said: 'Mamma, maybe it is a good thing I make my living this way. I believe I do good and it needs the spur of necessity to keep me at it. I would not work like this if we had plenty without it.' "

As yet there was no open antagonism between the administration of President Wilson and Mr. Bryan. He opposed in his speeches any preparedness for war, because he still believed that a million men would spring up overnight if it should ever become necessary for them to spring. Efforts were made to interest him in the expedition of Henry Ford's peace ship, but he had plans of his own for a personal, private effort, and if it were successful, the glory would be undivided. Colonel House wrote to Ambassador Page on August 12, 1915:

"Dear Page:

"The Bryans have been stopping with the X's. X writes me that Bryan told him that he intended to go to Europe soon and try peace negotiations. He has Lloyd George in mind in England, and it is then his purpose to go to Germany.

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"I take it he will want credentials from the President, which, of course, he will not want to give, but just what he will feel obliged to give is another story. I anticipated this when he resigned. I knew it was merely a matter of time when he would take this step.

"He may find encouragement in Germany, for he is in high favour now in that quarter. It is his purpose to oppose the President upon the matter of 'preparedness,' and, from what we can learn, it will not be long before there will be open antagonism between the Administration and himself.

"It might be a good thing to encourage his going to Europe. He would probably come back a sadder and wiser man. I take it that no one in authority in England would discuss the matter seriously with him, and, in France, I do not believe he would even get a hearing.

"Please let me know your impressions upon this subject. . . ."

Ambassador Page answered that it would do no harm to let Bryan come to Europe, and it would be a good way of getting rid of him at home. "It'll be fun to watch Bryan perform," Page wrote to House, "and never suspect that anybody is lying to him or laughing at him; and he'll go home convinced that he's done the job and he'll let loose doves all over the land till they are thick as English sparrows. Not even the President could teach him anything permanently." And the President, it was admitted, was the best school-teacher in the land.

But Bryan finally decided against a peace trip to Europe. Maybe he saw its futility, maybe the spur of necessity was absent.

Bryan and his wife spent much of their time at their

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Florida home, Villa Serena, where bougainvillea vines met in an arch over the entrance and a royal palm towered "in a surprising way." Mrs. Bryan noted in her diary: "We lead a simple life. Will works three or three and a half hours each morning, felling trees (his greatest enjoyment), cutting off dead limbs, pruning, splitting wood, etc.

"I have been reading to him as he works. We are going on with *The Life of John Bright*, which we began at Asheville more than a year ago. In the morning, too, we have a little reading. Will can dress more quickly than I and so reads while I comb my hair. We are reading Ruskin's *Ethics of the Dust*. After a few pages of that we read our Bible verses and say our prayers, little John joining. It is so sweet to be able to begin the day in this quiet way without any hurry. If it were not for the mail! This is the fly in the ointment! It takes a tremendous amount of patience to answer every sort of question. We have found quite an efficient young man who takes dictation. I open all the mail and sort it, answering some, entering requests for lectures in our book, etc. We have many telegrams too. This last month (December) was particularly bad on account of the effort to get Will to join the Ford Peace Party at The Hague. I paid the bill for telegrams, for the month, this week. It was \$103.97. I regarded that a little excessive for people of moderate income."

A later entry in Mrs. Bryan's incomplete diary reads: "We met some interesting people in Miami. John Wanamaker came to see us, very much troubled about the war situation. John Sargent, the great portrait painter, was doing some interiors in James Deering's home and we were invited to luncheon to meet him. From his appearance he is the last man I would have guessed to be an artist. Tall, heavy,

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florid, sandy-gray hair with bushy whiskers to match, blue eyes and rather a gruff manner. He and Will had a congenial time. Mr. Sargent and Mr. Charles Deering called later, but unfortunately I was out. I had a caladium leaf I wanted to show him—a most wonderful bit to color. I am sure he would have liked it.”

As the campaign of 1916 approached, many of President Wilson’s supporters were worrying about Mr. Bryan’s attitude toward his former chief. For the first time since he emerged into the limelight in 1896 Bryan was not a delegate to a Democratic national convention. He had failed to win a seat in Nebraska, and he went to the convention as a newspaper correspondent. But delegates and the galleries clamored for a speech from him—no Democratic national convention within the memory of man had been complete without that—and a motion was passed calling upon him for a speech. Mr. Bryan was willing. The Wilson men were tremulous, for they feared that Bryan might oppose Wilson and make his reelection difficult. And then Bryan began to speak in the same resonant voice, with the same oratorical gestures, and this time he used an “expansive smile” and he looked to the *World* correspondent like “a patriarch conferring a benediction over his congregation.” He said that for him every Democratic convention was “a Democratic love-feast,” and he praised Wilson mightily, for doing his best to keep the nation out of the war and for breaking the power of Wall Street by the Federal Reserve system. In his enthusiasm Mr. Bryan even forgot that he had inserted in the platform of 1912 a plank that the President should enjoy only one term. Everybody forgot it, as was everybody’s wont with inconvenient platform planks.

At the convention of the Progressive party in 1916 Victor

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Murdock made a speech in which he predicted that there would be a new party formed in 1916 with Bryan and Henry Ford as the candidates on a platform advocating pacifism and prohibition. The delegates cheered for Bryan enthusiastically, but he stood in the rear of the hall and calmly shook his head in the negative. He knew a forlorn hope when he saw one, and he intended to die a Democrat.

During the campaign of 1916 Bryan went about the West speaking in favor of the reelection of Woodrow Wilson, telling people that the President had kept the country out of war. The only alternative was the election of Charles E. Hughes and the Republicans who were shouting for war. After the reelection of Wilson the United States drifted nearer to war than ever, and it looked impossible to prevent it. Bryan continued his efforts, and as late as the first months of 1917 he urged a referendum to the people to decide whether or not the United States should enter the war. But on April 6, 1917, when war was finally declared, Bryan hastened to telegraph to President Wilson: "Believing it to be the duty of the citizen to bear his part of the burden of war and his share of its perils, I hereby tender my services to the government. Please enroll me as a private whenever I am needed, and assign me to any work that I can do. Until called to the colors, I shall, through the Red Cross, contribute to the comfort of soldiers in the hospital and, through the Y.M.C.A., aid in safeguarding the morals of the men in camp." It was decided not to use Mr. Bryan in the front-line trenches, for he was fifty-seven years old in 1917.

Bryan believed in applying the tenets of Christ to the international problems of the world. But Christ, one feels, always knew what he was up against and courageously

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refused to participate in the detailed development of those things with which he was not in accord. Mr. Bryan, on the contrary, took an active part in the political and economic details of the problems of his day. Christ was crucified; Bryan, when his cause had lost, offered to enlist as a private in the armies of the United States. There is nothing in the New Testament to indicate that the better part of valor is discretion; Mr. Bryan, however much he may have deluded himself to the contrary, always practiced that principle in a pinch.

II

In his later years Bryan was compelled to change his issues and his tactics because of numerous developments in the social life of the country. As Bryan himself put it in 1920: "There is less partisanship today than I have ever known before. The partisanship we knew grew largely out of the Civil War. The further it gets away the less influence it has, and since then two wars have tended to bring the people of the United States into united action. Some four million young men have been brought from their homes and mingled together regardless of parties. It is difficult to make them feel on party questions as their fathers who fought against each other felt." When Bryan first entered national politics, it was comparatively easy to arouse sectional feeling, and in his first campaign of 1896 it was his main endeavor to put the new West against the corrupt East and the great common man against the calculating banker of European origin. As he advanced in years the economic interest of the Western population and of the Eastern population became more nearly the same, so that he found that gradually the problems he was interested

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in were solved by circumstances and dead for political purposes. Free silver was a quaint obsession long since eradicated, imperialism was a fact and no longer a question, the trusts were more powerful than ever and the small man held stock in them. Bryan found it necessary to renew the sources of his propaganda; there is a faint note of regret in the above statement concerning the disappearance of partisanship. In the search for new problems Bryan revived his lifelong personal interest in prohibition and renewed his advocacy of God. The rest of his life was spent helping to bring the one into politics and trying to inject the other into science.

Five months after Bryan resigned as Secretary of State Mrs. Bryan noted in her diary, under date of October 2, 1915: "This last week has been an interesting one. Will has done his first real campaigning for prohibition. . . . He made sixty speeches in forty counties to (it was estimated) between 200,000 and 250,000 people. It was in a sense a triumph for him. It demonstrated one thing clearly, i.e., that in spite of all the abuse from the press, he has lost none of his popularity. The audiences were so attentive and responsive, I do not see how he could have failed to convince many. I had some glimpses of what a national campaign on this subject would be—a veritable religious crusade." And there was nothing that Bryan, retired from the cares of state, liked better than a religious crusade. "In his zeal for souls," wrote Mrs. Bryan, "he was like an evangelist." But there was always one place where Mr. Bryan could never conquer. Wicked New York, apparently, was not interested in its soul. "The only time I ever knew him defeated in religious work," wrote Mrs. Bryan, "was one night when we went to a mission along the water front in New York

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City. Among the wretched group gathered in the hall, Mr. Bryan looked like a creature from another world—his skin so fair, his eyes so clear, his dress so tidy, and his speech so different. When asked to speak, he did not know what to say, and told me afterwards, 'It takes a man who has been saved from the depths to reach men like these. I cannot do it. I lack the necessary past.' "

In the early years of his career Bryan, although he was firm in his belief in temperance and made every private effort to convert others to that belief, refused to have anything to do with the political activities of the prohibitionists. He thought it a local question, and he contented himself with generalizations on the virtues of water, such as the following: "Water, the daily need of every living thing. It ascends from the seas, obedient to the summons of the sun, and, descending, showers blessing upon the earth; it gives of its sparkling beauty to the fragrant flower; its alchemy transmutes base clay into golden grain; it is the canvas upon which the finger of the Infinite traces the radiant bow of promise. It is the drink that refreshes and adds no sorrow with it—Jehovah looked upon it at creation's dawn and said—'It is good.' "

In his speeches and writings he continually urged temperance or gave examples of intemperance. In one of his travel essays on Mexico Bryan wrote: "Our attention was called to a dog there which had acquired a taste for pulque. He goes to the field twice a day and finds some maguey plant from which pulque is being extracted (the period of extraction covers several weeks) and gets his dram, and then he staggers back with red eyes and sleeps off the effect of the liquor. He has ceased to be of value as a shepherd dog, but he is still useful as a horrible example."

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Bryan found authority for the use of grape juice, unfermented, in the story of "Joseph the Dreamer," which he told thus in his book, *Famous Figures of the Old Testament*: "I hope my readers will pardon me for calling attention to the fact that the dream of Pharaoh's chief butler gives us high authority for the use of unfermented wine. This is the language of the butler:

"'In my dream, behold, a vine was before me; and in the vine were three branches; and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes; and Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.'

"No fermentation there—no alcohol, just the juice fresh from the grape.

"The dream was a prophecy, and it meant life to the dreamer."

Bryan also remarked concerning the story of Joseph that "it is not bad to be a dreamer—if you have the corn."

Aside from these pleasantries it was impossible to interest Mr. Bryan in the cause of bringing about temperance by national law until other men had done so much propaganda work throughout the country that it looked as if there were great chances of success. While he was Secretary of State, Bryan had expressed himself as in favor of prohibition, but he did not think it a party issue. After his resignation he worked for the Anti-Saloon League and other organizations and delivered lectures throughout the country, as we have seen from Mrs. Bryan's diary. The newspapers criticized him because he accepted pay for his prohibition lectures from the Anti-Saloon League. Later Bryan had a controversy with William H. Anderson, the

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superintendent of the Anti-Saloon League, who accused Bryan of only jumping on the prohibition band-wagon after success was assured and of using the movement to further his own political ends. But Bryan did effective propaganda work for the movement. At Billy Sunday's tabernacle he made converts by the thousands, while the audience sang "The Brewers' Big Horses Can't Roll Over Me." In January, 1917, he sent an audience of five thousand in Illinois into a great spasm of enthusiasm by shouting, "You shall not bury the Democratic party in a drunkard's grave."

Between 1916 and 1919 Bryan was engaged in negotiations for a motion picture on the curse of drink, of which he was to be the star. Augustus Thomas was to write the scenario. Bryan was supposed to help raise the money necessary to produce the picture and also to use his influence in getting it distributed through the churches, the Anti-Saloon League, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the Good Templars. The Good Templars were to share in the profits, and Mr. Bryan himself, though he at first disclaimed all desire to share in the profits, finally consented to take the largest share of them, 35 per cent. Bryan did not live up to his contract, and he was sued by the promoter of the enterprise, George R. Dalton. It was intended that Bryan's friends should finance the motion picture, and Mr. Dalton approached Edward F. Goltra, a boyhood friend of Bryan, and a member of the Democratic National Committee from Missouri. Mr. Goltra offered to finance the motion picture, which was to cost about \$150,000, if he should succeed in his efforts to get back from the United States government a fine of \$160,000 assessed by the government against a company in which he was interested, the

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Hostetter Bitters Company, for a violation of the prohibition law.

The plan was to make a motion picture out of Bryan's prohibition lectures, with Mr. Bryan making the appropriate gestures. The name of the picture was to be "Throughout the Ages." There were to be scenes of Oriental feasting and scenes of drunkenness in the various countries of Europe. The scenario included a scene in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, and an effort was to be made to induce President Wilson to pose for scenes in this sequence. The complaint in Dalton's suit against Bryan for breach of contract read, "Defendant Bryan is a man of peculiar attainment, possessing especial ability as an actor."

But Bryan appeared in one motion picture scene involving prohibition. Less than an hour after the Supreme Court of the United States decided in 1920 that prohibition was legal, the motion picture camera men found Bryan in a hotel lobby and asked him to pose. He did so. "Talk, say something, Mr. Bryan," one of the cameramen urged, "a little pep, a little action, please."

"Ah, gentlemen," Bryan responded, with gestures, "I am much gratified at the Supreme Court's decision today, although it was not unexpected—"

"Cut," shouted the movie men, "'snuff," and they ran off for more news, leaving Bryan in the middle of a smile with his arm suspended in mid air.

Bryan wrote of his satisfaction with the final passage of the prohibition amendment, "Never since history began to record the doings of man have the people won at the polls such a moral victory as our nation won when the saloon was banished from the land."

On the night of January 16, 1919, when the prohibition

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amendment went into force, Bryan celebrated the occasion in Washington with the leading dry men of the nation. He called it "the Passover from the old era to the new," and he was chosen to make the last speech. When the clock showed that it was one minute before midnight, he quoted from the Bible the passage in which the angel assured Joseph and Mary that they might take the child Jesus back to the Holy Land: "They are dead that sought the young child's life!" King Alcohol, said Bryan, had slain many more millions of children than Herod ever did, and there was joyous applause from his associates in propaganda.

After prohibition was adopted as a law, Bryan suggested other moral reforms. He presented to the constitutional convention of Nebraska a proposal to write into the constitution of that State a provision calling for the single standard of morality for men and women. He urged that the single standard be established by declaring against the segregation of vice and its licensing, and he suggested that the penalties for immorality be enforced equally against both sexes. He wanted women to be declared respectable by constitutional provision, or, rather, he wanted both men and women who broke his particular moral code to be declared disreputable. In a magazine article on the subject he wrote: "The fight against sexual sins will be much easier than the fight against the saloon, because there are no vast combinations of capital ready to furnish an unlimited corruption fund. . . . Then, too, in the social evil each single act is a sin, while it was not a single drink, but the drink habit, that aroused opposition." He found another crying outrage in the low age of consent for women in some States. "The age of consent is another illustration," he wrote. "In many States it has been raised within the last few years;

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in one, where it still remains at fourteen, I found that the woman must be twenty-one in order to make a valid deed to real estate. That is, she can barter away a priceless virtue when she is fourteen, but she must be seven years older before she is considered mature enough to convey a piece of stumpy land."

Bryan also tried to get a bill introduced into Congress denying the use of the mails to newspapers which published bets on races, elections, or prize fights and the winners of lotteries.

In addition to his interest in moral reforms Bryan was interested in the development of Florida real estate. He had invested money of his own in real estate there, and he had profited by his investments, much to the disgust of the eastern newspapers. He also devoted part of his time to delivering lectures for a real estate company at \$250 a lecture. Bryan sat in an arm chair on a float and talked to the crowd that lined the shore of a lagoon. A narrow strip of water separated Bryan from the crowd on shore. A large cotton umbrella sheltered his bald head, and sometimes he wore a broad-brimmed white hat. He joked with his audiences about his frequent campaigns for President, and he spoke to them of the general glories of the Florida climate. After the address, which lasted about one hour, people crowded up to shake hands. Then Gilda Gray danced for the same real estate company.

Another feature of life in Miami was Mr. Bryan's Sunday Bible Class, which was held in Royal Palm Park, and the attendance varied from four thousand to eight thousand.

Bryan also maintained his interest in national politics, and when the Democratic National Convention was held in

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San Francisco in 1920, he attended as a delegate from Nebraska. It looked as if an effort would be made in this convention to repudiate the prohibition amendment, and Bryan was determined to resist such an effort with all his strength. He was a member of the Committee on Resolutions which framed the platform, and he offered a minority report urging a plank in the platform endorsing prohibition and pledging the Democratic party to no modification of the enforcement law. He also had a few other suggestions. He wanted the government to establish a national bulletin which would give publicity equally to both parties during campaigns. He had suffered in his three presidential campaigns from lack of campaign funds, and he wished to equalize the battle as much as possible. He also urged a plank against profiteering and wanted a law to limit the profits of middlemen. He advocated a plank opposing compulsory military service. His fifth plank praised President Wilson's treaty of peace as the best under the circumstances, for that was the least the Democratic party could do for the work of its own leader. Bryan urged that ratification of treaties thereafter should be by a majority vote, "so that it will be as easy to end a war as to declare a war."

Bourke Cockran, of New York, had introduced a resolution favoring permission to make light wines and beers for home consumption, and Bryan spoke against any modification of the prohibition law. "We believe," he said, speaking for the advocates of prohibition, "that, having won a victory that terminates a curse that has come down to man throughout the ages, we should not encourage further discussion of the subject or invite lawlessness in any part of the country. (*Applause.*)" "It is alcohol that we hate," Bryan continued, "and we hate it whether we find it in

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whisky, wines, or in beer. If any one tells you that wine is a harmless drink, I remind you that from the earliest time wine made men drunk. The Bible says that when Noah came out of the ark he planted a vineyard and drank of the wine thereof and was drunken; his sons, in mortification, took a garment and, walking backwards that they might not see their father's nakedness, spread the garment over him as he lay drunk in his tent. Back in the twilight days when Homer sang of the fall of Troy—even then the word 'winebibber' was used as a term of reproach. Alexander the Great, in a drunken quarrel, slew a favorite general who had once saved his life. Wine has not ceased to be a mocker; Ibáñez, the greatest living novelist of Spain, tells us that in his native land it is wine—not whisky but wine—that destroys the young men of promise before they are old enough to be of service to their country. This is the verdict of history, confirmed by our own experience; and it condemns beer as well as wine."

The advocates of modification had maintained that men would not get drunk on wine and beer. "Why should we be drawn away from the tremendous problems that confront us today," Bryan asked the convention, "in order to quarrel over the amount of alcohol in a non-intoxicating drink? (*Applause.*) If you cannot get alcohol enough to make you drunk, why do you want alcohol at all? Why not cut it altogether and go on about your business? (*Great applause.*)"

Bourke Cockran answered Bryan and protested against the lack of argument in his oratory. "And as I listened to the exalted tone which governed these speeches," he said, "I was profoundly impressed with the truth of that statement of the philosopher who, examining the lessons of history,

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said it was a remarkable, although somewhat distressing fact, that nearly all the mischief in the world that was really formidable was caused by good men and good women. No vicious legislation, no tyranny, was ever yet attempted for the purpose of making people bad. All the mistaken legislation which has resulted in oppression, in tyranny, was conceived in the ill-digested hope of making people good by violence and coercion, and that, thank God, is impossible. . . . These ladies and gentlemen speak as if the use of liquor has been abolished by this amendment. It has not, but there is this difference: that formerly where the average drunkard was jolly, now he is paralyzed. (*Laughter and applause.*)”

The convention finally decided that the Democratic party would say nothing in its platform about the enforcement of prohibition. Both Bryan's suggestion and Bourke Cockran's suggestion were voted down. Bryan then asked the convention to vote in favor of his national bulletin. “We want it,” he said, “so that they cannot open the door of the United States Senate with a golden key. We want it so that Wall Street will not be able to build a barrier in front of the White House, over which a candidate can climb only with the aid of bales of bills.” But that idea was also voted down.

When some delegates suggested that Bryan was not supporting Woodrow Wilson, he told the convention: “You cannot call me an enemy of Woodrow Wilson; it was my treaty plan that he took to Paris; I have helped him to become immortal. If I could secure ratification without reservations and give to Woodrow Wilson the honor of securing it, I would walk up to the scaffold today and die with

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a smile upon my face." But Bryan's suggestions concerning the treaty of peace were also voted down.

Bryan's influence in politics was already dying rapidly. Mark Sullivan in describing the convention scenes of 1920 wrote of him: "Bryan seemed like an elderly uncle in a black alpaca coat who comes to visit us in the city. We give him the easiest chair; we treat him with affection; when he advises us about our affairs, we listen respectfully—but we go our own way." The time was coming when politicians, impatient with his kind of advice, would refuse Bryan even the easiest chair. Bryan said to some of his friends, "This is not my kind of a convention. Four years from now it will be my kind of a convention." "Can't you change it to your kind of convention?" some one asked. "The leopard cannot change its spots," Bryan replied. During the campaign he took practically no part, for he felt that the Democratic candidate, James M. Cox, was representative of the anti-prohibition forces and of the eastern capitalists. When Cox was nominated by the San Francisco Convention, Bryan made the statement: "My heart is in the grave with our cause, and I must pause until it comes back to me. The nomination of Cox cannot be interpreted in any other way than a victory for the wets, although of course there were other forces behind him." After Cox was defeated by Warren G. Harding, Bryan suggested that Woodrow Wilson should resign with the understanding that President-Elect Harding become President immediately. Before the Democratic convention in 1920 Bryan had expressed his disagreement with Wilson's views about Article X of the League of Nations Covenant, Bryan maintaining that "no person in the country has dared to say that Congress should have taken from it the right to declare

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war; and the Democratic party can never afford to go before the country on that issue." He had also said: "Broken down in health by the weight of cares and anxieties such as have fallen to no other occupant of that high office, the Chief Executive has been denied the information essential to sound judgment and safe leadership." But Mr. Wilson paid no attention to any of Mr. Bryan's suggestions.

Bryan went back to his Florida real estate, his lectures, and his Bible talks, with the hope that 1924 would be more his kind of convention than 1920, in spite of the fact that the National Committee had decided on New York City as the place for the 1924 convention.

As the time for the convention approached, Bryan made a campaign to be elected a delegate from Florida. He had given his house in Lincoln, Nebraska, to a religious organization, and his heart as well as his mind and money were now involved in Florida real estate. Florida saw the advantage of sending William Jennings Bryan as one of its delegates to the national convention, for at the moment Florida was interested in publicity. The *Hollywood News*, a publication of the Hollywood Land and Water Company, of Hollywood, Florida, published the following notice: "When he said he would move to Miami, newspapers everywhere printed under big headlines: 'MR. BRYAN GOES TO FLORIDA SEEKING SUNSHINE, CLIMATE AND HEALTH.' That was good PUBLICITY—the kind Miami needed but could not buy because she didn't have money enough to pay for it.

"Bryan would like to go to the Democratic National Convention as a delegate from Florida. That would give Miami two or three million dollars' worth of printer's ink FREE. Remember this: Newspapers like to print things

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about Bryan and Miami; also this: He came out of three National Conventions with nominations for president.

"DO NOT FORGET: Bryan is a world character. We would like to have him in Hollywood. If Miami does not want him, Hollywood DOES, very much."

Some men were still urging Bryan to seek the nomination for President. In his papers there is a carbon copy of a letter Bryan wrote to some delegate from Arkansas who had asked permission for the Arkansas delegation to nominate him in 1924. He refused with thanks on these grounds: "I have neither the disposition, the time or the money to make a campaign for the nomination and I would feel greatly humiliated to be put in the attitude of a candidate and then fail to secure the nomination. It would be an unfortunate ending of my political career. All my other nominations have come without effort and I am willing to stand upon the record of three nominations given me by the party without any organized propaganda on my behalf." Then he added this paragraph:

"The only condition under which I feel I would be justified in considering the question from a personal standpoint is the remote contingency which cannot be brought about by any plans of myself or my friends—if when the convention meets, no one has a preponderating influence and no one else can be found to lead our forces—note the number of 'if's'—and the party should feel that it is my duty to my party and my country to be a candidate the fourth time, I would consider it; but, as I say, such a condition is very improbable—only a remote possibility if a possibility at all."

But he had a suggestion for a Presidential candidate, and the man was, of course, a Florida man. Dr. A. A. Murphree,

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President of the University of Florida, he declared would be "as great a surprise and as great a success" as Woodrow Wilson. He kept urging Dr. Murphree's nomination in newspapers and in letters to delegates, after he had received his friend Dr. Murphree's permission to use his name. Dr. Murphree felt that it could do no harm to the University of Florida and plenty of good to the State's publicity. Then Bryan started for New York through Florida in a Ford with his secretary driving. On the lapel of his alpaca coat was pinned a large pennant, reading "Florida," which he wore throughout the sessions of the convention and on the streets of New York.

The convention of 1924 in New York City proved to be the most tumultuous convention the Democratic party had ever held. It was the battlefield of a struggle between the dying forces of the South and the West against the growing dominance of New York and the East, and Bryan was the decaying leader of the forces which would not die without a prolonged struggle. His speeches in that convention, and the action of the spectators toward him, were an unpleasant spectacle, and he added to it the touch of toothless obscenity by his constant injection into his efforts of the word "Florida." Like Ponce de Leon he seemed in grave need of a fountain of youth, and like him he seemed to be under the delusion that he had found it among the swampy Everglades.

Some of the most unpleasant experiences of William Jennings Bryan's life took place in Madison Square Garden, but none could have been so distressing as his experience there in 1924. The galleries were crowded with the people he understood least, New Yorkers, and they were enthusiastic for their Governor, Alfred E. Smith, who



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THE DELEGATE FROM FLORIDA TO THE DEMO-
CRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION AT NEW YORK
IN 1924

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had made it quite clear that he did not believe in Bryan's political or moral ideas. They were proving disorderly, for it was impossible for them to see the victory of their candidate, and they were in no mood to receive the fulsome type of oratory with which Bryan had delighted country audiences for so many years. He rose to speak against any mention of the Ku Klux Klan in the Democratic party's platform, and the followers of Governor Smith, who happened to be born a Catholic, wished a strong denunciation of that organization as un-American and uncongenial to the tenets of the Democratic party's faith. Bryan began:

"Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, members of the Convention: It is now twenty-eight years since Democratic Conventions became gracious enough to invite me and patient enough to listen to me, and I have not words in which to express my gratitude for the love and loyalty of millions of Democrats who have been my co-laborers for more than a quarter of a century." There was applause. "I have spoken to you on many themes, never on themes more important than this today, and since they take applause out of my time, and since I am speaking to your hearts and heads and not to your hands, keep still and let me speak to you." There were cries from the gallery assuring him, "We'll do it." The galleries continued to scoff and to hiss and to boo during the rest of his remarks. Then he fought hard for his religion: "And now I want to tell you my last and strongest objection, and let the galleries scoff if they dare: I say I am not willing to divide the Christian Church when we ought to stand together to fight the battles of religion in this land. (*Cheers and applause.*)"

"The Democratic party," he said, "has done more for me than for any other living man, and, my friends, I am

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grateful. I cannot express my gratitude. I can paraphrase the words that are familiar when I express my sentiments:

“Partisans, spare that party, touch not a single bough;
In youth it sheltered me, and I will protect it now.”

(Loud cheers and applause.)

“But, my friends, much as I owe to my party, I owe more to the Christian religion. If my party has given me the foundations of my political faith, my Bible has given me the foundations of a faith that has enabled me to stand for the right without stopping to count how many stood to take their share with me. *(Applause and cheers.)* . . . And, my friends, I believe religion is of more importance than politics, and I believe the world needs now not so much to get into a fight between denominations as it does to get back to God and a sense of responsibility to God. *(Applause.)* . . . I call you back in the name of our God; I call you back in the name of our party; I call you back in the name of the Son of God and Savior of the world. Christians, stop fighting, and let us get together and save the world from the materialism that robs life of its spiritual values. *(Applause.)* It was Christ on the Cross who said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ And, my friends, we can exterminate Ku Kluxism better by recognizing their honesty and teaching them that they are wrong. *(Boos and hisses, followed by applause.)*”

Bryan was telling the truth about himself when he said, “I believe religion is of more importance than politics.” His power in politics, even he could see, was fast leaving him. He was truly an old man. In the committee meeting before the platform was reported to the convention, there was disagreement about whether the Ku Klux Klan should

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be mentioned. The committee sat and argued until dawn. Bryan kneeled and asked God's guidance of their deliberations. He had never had to do that before. In all his other conventions he had been strong enough to fight his own battles, but this was too much for his waning political strength and oratorical power. There was even a crack in his voice, and the silver quality for which he had been famous was turning green. Pathetically, he begged God to help him and the convention of his party which would no longer be guided by him.

Bryan was determined that nothing would be done by this Convention to make possible the return of the hated liquor. As a member of the Committee on Resolutions he was asked to write a plank to go into the platform expressing regret at the death of President Harding. "As I first wrote the plank," he wrote, "I used the expression, 'Our party stands uncovered beside the bier of Warren G. Harding, etc.' Senator Caraway asked if I was not afraid that some might mistake that for standing by 'beer.' I accepted the suggestion, at once recognizing that the word 'grave' was preferable."

On the eighth day of this turbulent convention, when the delegates still could not agree on a nominee, Bryan arose to explain his vote. It was necessary for unanimous consent to be given before he could be allowed to speak. When unanimous consent was asked for him, there were numerous and distinct cries of "No, no, no," "I object," and "Objection." But Chairman Walsh ignored these and granted the permission. Bryan began by telling the delegates that he only wished to aid them toward a harmonious decision. He said that the Democratic party had plenty of candidates in all the States, and then he said: "We have a

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man in Florida. He is the President of our State University." There was great laughter and derision. "His name," Bryan continued, "is Dr. A. A. Murphree." Voices shouted, "We want Smith. We want Smith." "He is a Democratic scholar," Bryan said. There were hisses and boos. "He is a scholarly Democrat," said Bryan. A voice in the gallery shouted more clearly than Bryan could now shout, "Never heard of one." Bryan began to get angry, for he answered, "Those who have not informed themselves upon the Nation's great men ought to be silent until they have had a chance to inform themselves." There were cheers and applause from Bryan's friends, who were watching the spectacle in distress. Bryan went on painfully and named Josephus Daniels and Joseph Robinson. Then he said, "This is probably the last convention of my party in which I shall be a delegate." There was great appreciative applause from the ribald gallery. "Don't applaud," Bryan said angrily; "I may change my mind." "I want to pay back today the debt of gratitude that I owe to the South," he said. "I lived in the North when I was thrice nominated for the Presidency." A voice shouted, "That will never be again." Bryan went on to the tune of constant interruption and advocated various men in the South and the North who he assured the Convention would make able Presidents. "If you will pardon me," he said, "my next Northern man has the misfortune to be my brother." There was laughter and applause with some hisses and boos for both Bryans. "But you need not take my word for it," Bryan said, "take the 50,000 majority they gave him in Nebraska, which is better than my word." "I have given you the names of seven Democrats," he said. Voices shouted, "Name the real one you have got in mind," "Attaboy," "What's the matter

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with Smith?" "Do not rush me, my friends," said Bryan. Voices: "McAdoo, McAdoo." "Give me time," he begged, "to develop my subject in my own way. I shall not disappoint you when I am through." A voice: "Say Smith." Finally he named William G. McAdoo and urged his nomination as a progressive Democrat. There was applause from the McAdoo supporters, hisses, boos, and general disorder in the galleries and on the floor from the Smith adherents. There were howls of "Oil! Oil! Oil!" and "Hurrah for Al Smith!" The chairman ordered that the disturbers be cleared out of the galleries. The Chairman announced that Bryan had half an hour to speak and that all time spent in interruptions would be added to his time. Voices shouted, "We don't want to hear him." The chairman assured the delegates and galleries that Mr. Bryan would be finished in five minutes, if they would listen in silence. Bryan tried to continue, but there was great disorder, cat-calls and shouts of "Out of order." Bryan, pathetically trying to say his say, assured his hostile audience, "I think the audience will not object to anything else I am going to say." A Voice: "Who is paying you for this?" Bryan: "I have passed the personal part." There were loud hisses. Another voice shouted, "A thousand dollars a minute." Then Bryan got angry: "I am glad we met in New York," he said. "I want the Democratic party to appeal to the millionaires of New York and tell them that less than half the people who die in the United States leave enough money to make it worth while to administer on their estates. Of thirty millions of voters, less than one in four have income enough to pay a tax on.

"The Permanent Chairman: Your time is up.

"Mr. William Jennings Bryan, of Florida, continuing:

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These men of wealth ought to know, and the Democratic party ought to tell them, that it is better to leave a good Government to their children than to leave large fortunes. (*Applause.*) That is what the Democratic party is prepared to do. We want to make this Government so good that to be a private citizen of the United States—(A voice: 'Stop speaking.')—will be better than to be a king in any other country in the world.

"I thank you for your attention. (*Applause and boos.*)

"Mr. Charles F. X. O'Brien, of New Jersey: The same old 'Dollar Bill,' the same old 'Dollar Bill.' "

The convention voted to exclude mention of the Ku Klux Klan in the platform, and it finally agreed to nominate John W. Davis, whom Bryan had opposed on the ground that he had once been J. P. Morgan's lawyer. And the convention then nominated Bryan's brother Charlie for Vice-President in order to attract votes in the West and to gain Bryan's support.

After the convention of 1924 Bryan told Senator Heflin that he had never been so humiliated in his life, and he had tears in his eyes as he said it. The cynical East, using contempt as its weapon, had stripped him bare of everything but his God, and the rest of his life was spent largely in furious resistance to what he regarded as attempts to take even Him away from him. There may have been consolation, however, in this passage in a letter he received in August, 1924, from his friend Dr. A. A. Murphree: "I appreciate your faithfulness and your friendship. The advertising that came to the University through your generous proposal concerning me has shown results in greatly increased correspondence with prospective Florida settlers from all sections of the United States."

CHAPTER VIII

THE DESCENT OF MAN

HIS IDEA of God had always been of great importance to William Jennings Bryan. His heritage, his training, and the facts of his own personal failures had strengthened the importance of that idea until he had practically nothing left except his God and his real estate. In his later years Bryan had two spiritual desires that were of the utmost importance to him. One was the desire to pass on to the rest of the world the ideas he had received from his parentage and his environment—he did not stop to consider the inherent value of those ideas for the world; and the other was to comfort those who might grapple with the thought that there was no inherent value in the world with the assurance that God was in His heaven, and that while all might not be right with the world just yet, Christ had died for it and was going eventually, with the help of God, to see that the righteous prevailed.

In the preface to *In His Image*, a series of religious lectures, Bryan wrote, "As those who brought me into the world, cared for me so tenderly during my early years and so conscientiously guarded and guided me during the formative period of my life, have passed to their reward, I know of no way in which this appreciation can be effectively expressed, except by transmitting these principles to others." Bryan thought that the great love he felt for his own father and mother must somehow be transmitted to the

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rest of the world, for he was essentially a propagandist, and he could love nothing without an attempt to gratify his vanity by sharing it. As he grew out of the control of his parents he acquired a few spiritual and worldly ideas of his own, and those too, it seemed to him, were of overwhelming importance to others. Unfortunately, owing to the commonplace quality of his ideas and the commonplace manner in which he attempted to transmit them—always excepting his oratorical powers of transmission—they were of very little value to anybody, for even those who agreed with him and loved him must have failed of stimulation from his unimaginative presentation of what was done so much better in the Bible itself. Bryan's voice, as he told his huge audiences under the palms of Miami the stories of the Bible and their significance for man today, must have been impressive, but when Bryan put those ideas on paper and distributed them they were singularly dull. His book, *Christ and His Companions*, might have been called *Little Rollo Among the Christians* for all the penetration or intelligence it offers.

"My purpose," Bryan added in that preface to *In His Image*, "is to prove, not only the fact of God, but the need of God, the fact of the Bible and the need of the Bible, and the fact of Christ and the need of a Saviour." This was an ambitious aim, but Bryan had never hesitated to bite off more than he could chew. His stern insistence, expressed with this lofty determination, was in itself the greatest form of doubt. The terrible fear that must have frequently come upon him that all he told himself and others might not be necessarily so, goaded him on to a fierce insistence upon the fact of what he wished so earnestly to be true. This insistence, born of his unconscious uncertainty, led

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him eventually into rasping intolerance by the pathway of bigotry.

Occasionally, however, even Bryan, busy man as he was, had his doubts. His recipe for this affliction was activity and more activity. "I am not sure," he wrote in his book, *Famous Figures of the Old Testament*, "that we will find many lessons of more practical importance than this: Keep busy. As 'Satan finds some mischief, still, for idle hands to do,' so human weakness besets us most between our tasks. As sins abound in the nights that separate the days of toil, so our periods of discouragement and doubt lurk in the dark intervals between our seasons of activity." And so Bryan ran again for President, or lectured again on the Chautauqua circuit, or went once more to Mexico, or chopped down trees, or issued another collection of his Bible essays. It was of vast importance to keep out the dark intervals of doubt between the seasons of activity.

Whatever doubts Bryan may have had when he found himself at home in the dark, there is no indication of their presence in his public life. He had the comfortable faculty of closing his mind to anything he did not wish to believe, and he was able to soar grandiloquently from the facts of nature to the hopes of his soul without feeling the necessity for establishing a logical link between the two. In his book *In His Image* there is this flowing passage: "The Creator has not left us in doubt on the subject of immortality. He has given to every created thing a tongue that proclaims a life beyond the grave.

"If the Father deigns to touch with divine power the cold and pulseless heart of the buried acorn and to make it burst forth from its prison walls, will He leave neglected in the earth the soul of man, made in the image of his Cre-

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ator? If He stoops to give to the rosebush, whose withered blossoms float upon the autumn breeze, the sweet assurance of another springtime, will He refuse the words of hope to the sons of men when the frosts of winter come? If matter, mute and inanimate, though changed by the forces of nature into a multitude of forms, can never die, will the imperial spirit of man suffer annihilation when it has paid a brief visit like a royal guest to this tenement of clay? No, He who, notwithstanding His apparent prodigality, created nothing without a purpose, and wasted not a single atom in all His creation, has made provision for a future life in which man's universal longing for immortality will find its realization. I am as sure that we shall live again as I am sure that we live today."

When in doubt, said Bryan, look around you. What he saw was for him not only less than what there was, but also an assurance that there was more. For him, "seeing is believing" was a puny faith. There was no room for humility in such a mind as his. An agnostic accepted the evidences of his senses and made the most of them, but Bryan created out of his hopes and fears the complete picture of bliss that was so necessary to his peace of mind. In the material world he fought against injustice for the common man, and no politician of his time had a wider emotional sense of that injustice than Bryan, for he was a common man. He tried to change the laws to meet his ethics, and sometimes he even succeeded, but when he failed, which was more often than not, because his mentality was never tuned to the actual desires and aspirations of his fellow men, he took refuge in a profound daydream of supreme grace ordaining an eternal happiness, based upon the principles of Christ and the laws of Moses. Thus existence became for

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him a great Sunday school; on the closing day—commencement—prizes would be distributed and punishments meted out. In one of his Bible sermons he said: "Then, too, a future life is necessary for the administration of any system of justice. The wrongs done by the wicked to their fellows in this world cannot be adequately punished here. If rewards are to be distributed according to merit, the record cannot be closed on earth; there must needs be a place where the accounts can be finally balanced." For Bryan was never able to conceive of justice and right for their own sake without any connection with a careful system of rewards and punishments. And religion—his particular religion with its beliefs in God, a hereafter, and Christ as the intermediary—he found necessary if there was to be any morality in the world. Man could not do good, Bryan felt, unless he felt a sense of responsibility to a god, and the Bible, he once wrote, "establishes the prayer-line of communication between the Heavenly Father and His children." Prayer itself, with its "expression of gratitude" and "pleas for guidance," was the necessary means of keeping in touch with God, and the Bible was the code book. Man was so weak, according to Bryan, that he would not be good unless this complete system was running in full working order, and anything that stopped its efficiency was the greatest menace to mankind. "If there is at work in the world today," he wrote, "anything that tends to break this mainspring, it is the duty of the moral, as well as the Christian, world to combat this influence in every possible way. I believe there is such a menace to fundamental morality. The hypothesis to which the name of Darwin has been given—the hypothesis that links man to the lower forms of life and makes him a lineal descendant of the brute—

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is obscuring God and weakening all the virtues that rest upon the religious tie between God and man. I venture to call attention to the demoralizing influence exerted by this doctrine."

Believing as he did in the necessity for religion as a restraint upon the naturally wicked impulses of himself and other men, Bryan's mind was always terrified at the unconscious realization that there was only one slip of a letter between immortality and immorality. He had a profound distrust of his own better nature and that of his fellow men. "Is man's natural tendency downward or upward?" he asked, and he answered unhesitatingly, "Who, if he examines himself and understands others, can doubt that it is downward?" "Just as the body needs life to keep it from yielding to an unrelenting force that pulls it downward toward the earth," Bryan added, "so man needs a spiritual force from above to keep him from the grossest transgressions." Civilization, he felt, had only increased man's temptations to do evil.

There was still another need for religion, Bryan felt, the positive of the need to keep man from transgression. What incentive was there for effort, if there was to be no eternal reward? "Why cross stormy oceans and endure continuing sacrifices upon the frontiers of the world if mankind does not need a Saviour and Christ was but an ordinary human being?" Bryan, who had never in his entire lifetime done one thing physically or mentally that was of supreme enough value in itself to give him or any one else complete satisfaction, could understand no effort for the sake of the process or for the beauty of the result. Perhaps when he made his Cross of Gold speech, fired by the desire to try his powers, Bryan might have felt the satisfaction of art

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for art's sake, but the result was too ephemeral, and there was always the personal problem of doing something again.

To Bryan's question, "Why cross stormy oceans and endure continuing sacrifices upon the frontiers of the world if mankind does not need a Saviour and Christ was but an ordinary human being?" some might be inclined to exclaim, "Why, indeed?" And Bryan was only able to answer this by begging the question in favor of the faith which he dared not renounce. He said that it was necessary to send people all over the world to tell it that mankind needed a Saviour and that Christ was divine because the Bible said that mankind needed a Saviour and that Christ was divine. Bryan felt that he needed a saviour from the terrors of despair, and that Christ, so the Bible taught him, was the glorious light on which he could keep his eyes so that they would neither turn aside in wickedness nor shut themselves in despondency.

In his pamphlet on *Orthodox Christianity versus Modernism* Bryan expressed his fear in the following sentence: "If the Bible is true, Christ has made of death a narrow, starlit strip between the companionship of yesterday and the reunion of tomorrow; if the Bible is false, who shall answer for us the agonizing question of Job, 'If a man die, shall he live again?' " Bryan felt that if he was not to be immortal, by means of the intercession of Christ, that he might as well never have been born by an act of God, as he fondly believed he was. And doubt about the intercession of Christ made him question the act of God, which he dared not do.

It is easy enough for us to tell Mr. Bryan that he should have been amiable, decent, tolerant about his religious beliefs, but for him there was involved in his religion all the

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happiness he had in this world and all the hopes that he had for future bliss. As Walter Lippmann has put it, the modernist asks the fundamentalist "to smile and to commit suicide." In his book, *American Inquisitors*, Walter Lippmann also wrote: "Have you ever stopped to think what it means when a man acquires the scientific spirit? It means that he is ready to let things be what they may be, whether or not he wants them to be that way. It means that he has conquered his desire to have the world justify his prejudices. It means that he has learned how to live without the support of any creed, that he can be happy, or at least serene, that he can be good, or at least humane, no matter what conclusion men may come to as to the origin of the world, or its plan, or its destiny. There are not many men of this sort in any age." Many of the men who have been happy in any age have usually been creators, and Bryan, entirely uncreative himself, turned to a mythical creator for the reasons and the sense of reality of his existence.

Bryan was unable to endure the strain of standing alone. Even his faith in God had to be reinforced by a faith in the fact that Christ had gone in advance for his, Bryan's, redemption. Unlike the steadfast thinker, he was terrified of lonely righteousness. This comes out plainly and significantly in his sermon on David delivered before his audience in Miami: "David has given to those about to die the most comforting words to be found in the Old Testament: 'The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

" 'He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.

" 'He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

" 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow

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of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.' ”

But this was not sufficient comfort for William Jennings Bryan, whatever David may have thought of it, for Bryan added immediately afterward: “Only in the New Testament do we find language more assuring:

“ ‘I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.’ ”

And then it was so easy for Bryan to believe in God. He wrote in italics in his book, *In His Image*, “I know of no theory suggested as a substitute for the Bible theory that is as rational and as easy to believe.” Perhaps it was the saving of the wear and tear on the brain and the heart that induced Mr. Bryan to fall so comfortably into the lap of his unproved conviction. Also, he never seemed to realize that the absence of any desirable substitute for his god did not prove his existence. The burden of proof lay with Bryan, and he continually squirmed and tried to shift it. He wrote: “If the atheist tells me that I have no right to believe in God until I can understand Him, I will take his own logic and drive him to suicide; for, by that logic, what right has an atheist to live unless he can understand the mystery of his own life?” Unfortunately for Bryan’s own logic the atheist happened to be alive, a matter which was tangible to both Bryan and to the atheist, whereas God was something the presence of which was not nearly so obvious to some of the least deniable evidences of the senses. “Is it not more rational,” Bryan asked, “to believe in *God* and explain the varieties of life in terms of divine power than to waste our lives in ridiculous attempts to explain the unexplainable? There is no mortification in admitting that there

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are insoluble mysteries; but it is shameful to spend the time that God has given for nobler use in vain attempts to exclude God from His own universe and to find in chance a substitute for God's power and wisdom and love." Once more he was up to his old trick, begging the question, by his insistence that God gave us time. And to prove the uselessness of probing the mysterious, Bryan used as an illustration the life of his favorite vegetable, the radish. "Did you ever raise a radish?" he asked. "You put a small black seed into the black soil and in a little while you return to the garden and find the full-grown radish. The top is green, the body white and almost transparent, and the skin a delicate red or pink. What mysterious power reaches out and gathers from the ground the particles which give it form and size and flavor? Whose is the invisible brush that transfers to the root, growing in darkness, the hues of the summer sunset? If we were to refuse to eat anything until we could understand the mystery of its creation we would die of starvation—but mystery, it seems, never bothers us in the dining-room; it is only in the church that it causes us to hesitate." Swallowing a radish, however, is a somewhat different process from swallowing an idea—the nourishment in an idea must be proved. And some of us even get indigestion from the beautiful pink radishes of which Mr. Bryan was so inordinately fond.

The advances of science were complete evidence for Bryan of the existence of God. "Now that we know," he wrote, "that the human voice can be carried through the thickest masonry and around the earth without the aid of wires—even to the most distant planets for all that we know—how can we doubt that an omnipotent God is within speaking distance of all His people?"

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Having begged the question of God by these various puny devices, Bryan found it easy to beg the question of Christ. In one of his speeches Bryan said, "*It is easier to believe Him divine than to explain in any other way His words, His life, and His death.*" The italics are Mr. Bryan's. Christ also appealed strongly to Bryan because he was a commoner. In one of his Bible talks the Great Commoner expressed his delight that God's plan of human salvation had not come from a learned society—or, he might have added, from New York—but from God and His son. "Who but the Almighty and His Son could have proposed such a plan of salvation? Even if man were presumptuous enough to advance such a plan, no human imagination could have suggested it, and yet this is the plan, not formulated by a school of philosophy, not constructed by a group of scientists, not elaborated by an assembly of educators, but proclaimed by one whom John described as unlettered—a Galilean peasant, reared in a carpenter shop."

"Why, if He was but a man," Bryan asked, "has not our civilization produced another of His kind?" It would also be impossible to establish that civilization had ever or ever would produce another William Jennings Bryan. And in one of his books Bryan wrote desperately, "If we cannot trust the words of Matthew and Luke as to Christ's birth, how can we be sure Christ ever lived?"

Having begged the question of God and Christ, it was easy for Bryan to take the Bible literally, to accept without question its divine authorship. If the Bible was written by men, Bryan demanded, why have men, who now have newspapers, telegraphs, telephones, radios, and universities, never made another as good? Bryan's conception of the artistic impulse was faulty, and he also never seemed to notice

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that Bible writing had nothing to do with telephoning, and that since the Bible was superior in his mind to the telephone book, it did not necessarily follow that the one was divine because the other was undoubtedly made under his very eyes. He insisted that the burden of proof was on those who challenged the divine authority of the Bible. "If man made the Bible," he wrote, "he is, unless he has degenerated, able to make as good a book today." The same, however, might be said of Rabelais.

George Santayana once wrote: "Most unprejudiced people would now agree that the value of those sacred histories and rules of life did not depend on their alleged miraculous origin, but rather on that solidity and perspicacity in their authors which enabled them to perceive the laws of sweet and profitable conduct in this world. It was not religion merely that was concerned, at least not that outlying, private, and almost negligible sphere to which we often apply this name; it was the whole fund of experience mankind had gathered by living; it was wisdom. Now, to record these lessons of experience, the Greeks and Romans also had their Books; their history, poetry, science, and civil law. So that while the theologically heathen may be those who have no Bible, the morally and essentially heathen are those who possess no authoritative wisdom, or reject the authority of what wisdom they have; the untaught or unteachable who disdain not only revelation but what revelation stood for among early peoples, namely, funded experience." Bryan, who was prejudiced by the force of his own desires, was both untaught and unteachable, and he seemed to take delight in disdaining the revelation of funded experience for the very reason that he possessed no authoritative wisdom of his own.

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It was Bryan, more than any atheist or any blasphemer in the United States, who pulled down the Bible from its high place by the literal interpretation to which he subjected its valuable poetry. He accused the modernists of making it worth nothing because they refused to subject it to a physical instead of a spiritual valuation; but it was he, singularly devoid of any intelligence of symbols, with his simple faith in words as words and facts as facts, who made the Bible everything for fear that he might make nothing of it if he took it as an important spiritual guide and a tonic for the imagination instead of an almanac of heaven and earth and a genealogical table of mankind. Bryan lacked so completely any feeling for real poetry that he could never appreciate the Bible for its own sake. As we have seen, he had no interest in any poem that did not teach a lesson, and usually the lesson had to be painfully obvious. "When all the miracles and all the supernatural are eliminated from the Bible," he wrote, "it becomes a 'scrap of paper.' When its truths are diluted by the language of men they cease to stir the heart. 'Weasel words,' to use a phrase employed, if not coined, by President Roosevelt, such as 'poetical,' 'allegorical,' and 'symbolical' suck the meaning out of the majestic utterances of those who were the spokesmen of Jehovah." If he had been able to discover that there was something inaccurate about the virginity of Mary, and that Christ's direct descent from God was not therefore authentic, Bryan would have been capable of throwing away all of Christ's precepts. Confucius and Mohammed received only his contempt, because they could not produce the proper birth certificates.

To Bryan the Bible was even practically useful as a dream book. He wrote: "Who can solve the riddle of the

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dream? Many theories have been proposed in explanation of dreams, nearly all of which attempt to rob them of any special significance or power. Those who believe the Bible need not be distressed if such explanations prove unsatisfactory; the Bible explanation of dreams is sufficient. The God who can speak to man in the daytime can communicate with him also at night. The sun never goes down on the Creator's power; there is no hiatus in His relationship to His children." One wonders whether Mr. Bryan always dreamed holy dreams.

With his ideas of God, Christ, and the Bible it is little wonder that Bryan in his last years became a fierce and rasping antagonist of the Darwinian theory of evolution. In the spread of its belief he saw the greatest menace to the Christian religion, for he knew that if he himself once accepted Darwin's theory of the descent of man, the whole prop of his morality was destroyed. It was unfortunate that his theory of morals was so feeble, but it was true. He wrote: "The evolutionary hypothesis is the only thing that has seriously menaced religion since the birth of Christ, and it menaces all other religions as well as the Christian religion, and civilization as well as religion,—at least, this is the conviction of a multitude who regard belief in God as the most fundamental of all beliefs and see in Christ the hope of the future." In his book, *Seven Questions In Dispute*, Bryan wrote: "Darwin's God was nowhere—he could not find him; Darwin's Bible was nothing—it had lost its inspiration; Darwin's Christ was nobody—he had an ape for an ancestor on both his father's and his mother's side. Such a Christ is impotent to save. . . . Such a Christ cannot meet the world's needs. Society, brought to the verge of ruin by a godless philosophy—by mind-worship—by

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learning unsanctified by love—can be revived and reconstructed only by the salvation and leadership of a full-statured Christ, whose code of morality is to endure for all ages, whose Gospel is for all mankind, and whose teachings will establish a universal brotherhood and usher in the day when swords shall be beaten into ploughshares and nations learn war no more.” Bryan’s affection for the common man, based on the fact that he was one himself, made it impossible for him to contemplate with equanimity the slaughter of so many of them. Before the war he had made strenuous efforts to establish universal peace, as we have seen, but when the war broke out in spite of all his efforts, he was sad and found his only consolation in the hope that eventually men would go to the Prince of Peace for their inspiration and turn their swords into ploughshares. Though this was delayed, he was not discouraged, for he told his platitudinous soul that God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform and that Rome was not built in a day. Then he spent the war period striving to convince his contemporaries of the divine virtues of peace, which he felt sure would come when men laid down their arms and their liquor. There was only one discouraging cloud on the horizon of his future hope, and that was made artificially by scientists and poured out of laboratories into schools and colleges to spell for a gaping world the terrible words “Darwin” and “Evolution.” If these words were to prove to the curious common man that after all he was not fashioned by the hand of God but was a slow growth from slime, there was no hope for sublimity, and Bryan felt that in that case the joys of righteousness would not be sufficient in themselves to restrain men from perpetual strife and perpetual hatred. This possibility worried him so much that he spent

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his time lecturing State legislatures on the advisability of passing laws preventing the teaching of evolution in their schools.

The mild-mannered, sweet-tempered Darwin brought out all the bestial vituperation of which Bryan was capable. Hitherto he had managed, even in the heat of political strife, to keep his temper, but his snarls at Darwin emanate from the jungles of the mind, where beliefs fight too desperately for victory. He leered and guffawed like an oaf when he grew tired of hammering with a stone club. Darwin's modest humility offended him more than brazen bigotry. He wrote about Darwin and evolution in a manner that he would have regarded as criminally unfair if it had been used against him politically or if it had been used by the opposition to his brand of Christianity. And all the abysmal ignorance of Bryan's mind exhibited itself in public when he began to talk or write about evolution. "The leg," he wrote, in heavy-handed sarcasm, "according to evolutionists, developed also by chance. One guess is that a little animal without any legs one day discovered a wart on the belly—it had come without notice or premonitory symptoms; if it had come on the back instead of the belly, the whole history of the world might have been different. But fortunately this wart came on the belly, and the little animal, finding that it could use the wart to work itself along, used it until it developed into a leg. And then another wart, and another leg. Why did man stop at two legs while the centipede kept on till it got a hundred?"

Bryan also delighted in putting together all the most absurd scientific theories he could find in newspaper despatches and other unreliable sources and took cheap advantage of the ease with which he could ridicule, for instance,

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the report from France that a scientist had communicated with the soul of a dog and found it was happy. And he was even capable of this attempt to link patriotism with his opposition: "Before commenting on the Darwinian hypothesis let me refer you to the language of its author as it applies to man. On page 180 of *Descent of Man* (Hurst & Company, edition 1874), Darwin says: 'Our most ancient progenitors in the kingdom of the Vertebrata, at which we are able to obtain an obscure glance, apparently consisted of a group of marine animals, resembling the larvae of the existing Ascidians.' Then he suggests a line of descent leading to the monkey. And he does not even permit us to indulge in a patriotic pride of ancestry; instead of letting us descend from American monkeys, he connects us with the European branch of the monkey family." Even if Mr. Bryan was joking, he can hardly be excused.

The thing which annoyed Bryan most about Darwin's works was the expressions of uncertainty which the great scientist used. "His works," wrote Bryan, "are full of words indicating uncertainty. The phrase 'we may well suppose,' occurs over eight hundred times in his two principal works. The eminent scientist is guessing." But Mr. Bryan, the eminent politician, was always sure. "If Darwin had described his doctrine as a guess instead of calling it an hypothesis, it would not have lived a year," Bryan wrote. Bryan, accustomed as he was to playing with words, was naturally inclined to overestimate their intrinsic value and to place too much importance upon the permanence of propaganda. Had he not been made a Presidential candidate by calling a currency standard a "cross of gold" and by characterizing a financial system as a "crown of thorns"? But when it was discovered that Mr. Bryan's hypothesis

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was false, his issue died quickly, but the guess of Darwin has endured because of its foundation in factual discovery rather than because of a four-syllable word.

Another thing about Darwin's theory that annoyed Bryan was this: "But the Darwinian doctrine is more dangerous because more deceptive. It *permits* one to believe in a God, but puts the creative act so far away that reverence for the Creator—even belief in Him—is likely to be lost." And Bryan once wrote, "Theistic evolution may be defined as an anaesthetic which deadens the patient's pain while atheism removes his religion." He liked the epigram so much that he repeated it constantly in speeches and essays. Bryan had to see his God in the invisible hosts of righteousness the Bible assured him were on his side. "As hope deferred maketh the heart sick," he wrote, "so the doctrine of Darwin benumbs altruistic effort by prolonging indefinitely the time needed for reforms; the Bible assures us of the triumph of every righteous cause, reveals to the eye of faith the invisible hosts that fight on the side of Jehovah and proclaims the swift fulfillment of God's decrees." Bryan wished to keep God near and on the job, and he refused to admit that God might have done his bit in the beginning and retired satisfied that all he could do for man was to create life, which was what some good Christians believed. Bryan wrote in *In His Image*: "If only an infinite God could have formed hydrogen and oxygen and united them in just the right proportions to produce water—the daily need of every living thing—scattered among the flowers all the colors of the rainbow and every variety of perfume, adjusted the mocking-bird's throat to its musical scale, and fashioned a soul for man, why should we want to imprison such a God in an impenetrable past?"

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This is a living world; why not a *living* God upon the throne? Why not allow Him to work *now*?" And again: "How can one feel God's presence in his daily life if Darwin's reasoning is sound? This restraining influence, more potent than any external force, is paralyzed when God is put so far away. How can one believe in prayer if, for millions of years, God has never touched a human life or laid His hand upon the destiny of the human race? What mockery to petition or implore, if God neither hears nor answers. Elijah taunted the prophets of Baal when their god failed to answer with fire; 'Cry aloud,' he said, 'peradventure he sleepeth.' Darwin mocks the Christians even more cruelly; he tells us that our God has been asleep for millions of years. Even worse, he does not affirm that Jehovah was ever awake. Nowhere does he collect for the reader the evidences of a Creative Power and call upon man to worship and obey God."

Bryan would have done well to follow the advice of St. Augustine when he wrote: "It very often happens that there is some question as to the earth or the sky, or the other elements of this world . . . respecting which one who is not a Christian has knowledge derived from most certain reasoning or observation, and it is very disgraceful and mischievous and of all things to be carefully avoided, that a Christian speaking of such matters as being according to the Christian Scriptures, should be heard by an unbeliever talking such nonsense that the unbeliever perceiving him to be as wide from the mark as east from west, can hardly restrain himself from laughing." Bryan, however, was incapable of restraining himself from talking on these subjects, of which he knew and wanted to know nothing.

At first he was content to talk against evolution, but the

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danger was too great to mankind for Bryan to refrain from action. He was in his last years a member of two organizations, one a somewhat secret society known as the Supreme Kingdom, and the other a militant campaigning organization known as the Bible Crusaders. Both of these organizations had for their purpose the stamping out of the teaching of evolution in the schools of the United States and the protection of the Bible from onslaughts of analysis or criticism that in any way seemed to cast doubt upon its divine authorship and the authenticity of its statements concerning the creation of the world and the birth of Christ.

And in 1923 Bryan was a candidate for the office of Moderator of the Presbyterian Church. He wrote letters to leading clergymen asking for their support, just as he had done when he was first a candidate for President of the United States in 1896. Bryan felt that as Moderator of the Presbyterian Church he could fight for his religion more effectively, but he was defeated, and his attempt to force the Presbyterian General Assembly to pass an anti-evolution resolution was also defeated. He thereupon declared that the Assembly was "machine-ridden." Incidentally, there was another reason for Bryan's desire to be Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, which comes out clearly in a letter he wrote on May 2, 1923, to the Rev. Dr. John A. Marquis. He began to feel that his religious activities would be the only source of his prominence, for he had already been made to feel keenly his political passing during the Democratic convention at San Francisco, and he was made to feel it still more keenly, and even cruelly, a year later in New York. Bryan wrote to Dr. Marquis, who had sug-

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gested that Bryan might be more useful in politics than in religion and that he would be hampered in politics by his election as Moderator: "In the first place, my power in politics is not what it used to be, and, therefore, my responsibility is not so great. There are three facts that ought to be borne in mind; first, the wets are against me and they have the organization and the papers in all the big cities of the north. I cannot get before the public and I may be turned down again as I was three years ago. I prevented the adoption of a wet plank but it had twice as many votes as my dry plank.

"While my power in politics has waned, I think it has increased in religious matters and I have invitations from preachers in all the churches. An evidence of the change is found in the fact that my correspondence in religious subjects is much larger than my correspondence in political subjects. My interest is deeper in religious subjects because I believe that the brute theory has paralyzed the influence of many of our preachers and undermined the faith of many of our young people in college."¹

Bryan used all the powers of speech he possessed to fight evolution in his lectures during 1921, 1922, 1923, and 1924. In October, 1921, he got into a long and bitter controversy with Dr. Birge, the President of the University of Wisconsin, who said that lectures such as Bryan had delivered were more likely to make atheists than believers. Bryan retaliated with statements denouncing Dr. Birge for teaching and permitting to be taught at the University of Wisconsin a theory that men had "brute blood" and were

¹ Bryan Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Packet 12. It is the intention of the Manuscript Division to file these papers in chronological order as soon as possible.

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descended from apes. He also offered \$100 to Dr. Birge if he would sign a statement that he was descended from an ape personally, and that he had "the right to teach the ape doctrine to the students of the university regardless of the wishes of parents and taxpayers." Dr. Birge declined to compete for Mr. Bryan's \$100. In a speech in West Virginia Bryan repeated his offer of \$100 to any professor who would sign a statement that he was a descendant of an ape. Many professors in this case immediately volunteered, and Bryan sent \$100 to Professor Spangler, with whom an extended controversy developed. Bryan wrote to his friend and fundamentalist representative in West Virginia, the Rev. O. W. Baylor:

"En Route,

"April 28, 1922.

"Rev. O. W. Baylor,

"17 Euclid Avenue,

"Morgantown, West Vir.

"My dear Mr. Baylor:

"I have just read in the *Chicago Tribune* quite an extended dispatch from Morgantown. It prints the substance of my letter in regard to Professor Spangler and says that he has received the one hundred dollars but he does not know whether he will keep it or not; but he is quoted as saying that he will not answer the questions. If he returns the money, I hereby authorize you to offer it to the first professor who hands you a written statement saying that he believes he is a descendant of an ape and then answers in writing as to whether he believes in: first, the miracles—if not all, in what particular ones he believes; second, whether he believes in the supernatural as recorded in the Old and New Testaments, including the virgin birth of

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Christ and the resurrection of Christ; third, whether he believes in Christ's claim to power made after His resurrection and reported in the concluding verses of the last chapter of Matthew.

"The University of West Virginia has an opportunity to lead the evolutionists by furnishing the first professor who will sign his name to a statement declaring himself to be the descendant of an ape. The President of the University of Wisconsin has declined to put this in writing, but from the eagerness with which your professors entered the fray that university may be predestined to furnish an unblushing son of an ape to lead the tree men in their retreat.

"If they are unwilling to act alone they may be willing to join together as they did in the attempt to answer my speech in advance. If so, you may divide the hundred dollars among them. If more than one hundred professors in your university sign the statement proposed I will add enough to make a dollar apiece for them.

"If they jointly and singly refuse to go on record you may put fifty dollars of it in your church fund as an appreciation of the interest you have taken and invest the other fifty dollars in my book *In His Image* and give copies of it to the professors. I am greatly obliged to you for the trouble you have taken in this matter. You can address me at Lincoln, Nebraska, and the letter will be forwarded to me.

"Very truly yours,

"W. J. BRYAN."¹

Bryan first began to attack the teaching of the theory of evolution in the schools of America when he came to the

¹ Bryan Papers, Library of Congress, Packet 12.

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conclusion that young people were going away from the church as a result of their college training. "These repeated indications of unbelief, especially among college students, puzzled him," wrote Mrs. Bryan. "Upon investigation he became convinced that the teaching of evolution as a fact instead of a theory caused the students to lose faith in the Bible, first in the story of creation, and later in other doctrines which underlie the Christian religion. He then read numerous books, and as always when investigating a subject, he read widely on both sides of this question." As he lectured in various parts of the country fond parents complained to him that their children were straying from the fold and wished his advice. "Four parents, two fathers and two mothers," Bryan wrote, "have complained to me that their daughters had their faith undermined in another woman's college. What shall it profit a student, boy or girl, if he gain an education and lose a soul?" With that mellifluous eloquence which largely distinguished him from the higher apes, Bryan sang this plaint in one of his later Bible talks: "If the cold and lifeless clay which had once been the habitation of the living Christ could be so dear to one of His followers that she was disconsolate when she thought it had been stolen away and hidden in some place unknown to His friends, can we be indifferent when, not His lifeless body but His spirit and His teachings are being removed from the places once hallowed by their presence?"

" 'They have taken away the Lord' from the schools. In some seventeen States the reading of the Bible is not permitted."

Bryan insisted that something must be done at once about this crying shame. "In other words," he demanded, "shall

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teachers, paid by taxation, be permitted to substitute the unproven hypothesis of scientists for the 'Thus saith the Lord' of the Bible, and so undermine the faith of the children of Christian taxpayers?" "The hand that writes the pay check rules the school," Bryan told the Legislature of West Virginia, when he made a speech urging the legislators to pass a law making it illegal for teachers to teach the theory of evolution in the schools of that State. And he liked the phrase so much that he repeated it in his book, *Seven Questions In Dispute*. In this book he also gave the following as his opinion of the functions of a teacher: "If a teacher of evolution insists that he should be permitted to teach whatever he pleases, regardless of the wishes of the taxpayers, the answer is obvious. He should teach what he is employed to teach, just as a painter uses the colors that his employer desires; just as the army or navy officer uses the equipment provided by the government and directs it against those whom the government desires attacked; just as the public official carries out the will of his constituents. Would a teacher be permitted to teach in any public school in the United States that a monarchy is superior to a government in which the people rule, or to advise pupils that they should not obey the law? If we are so careful not to permit employees of the public to do other things that are objectionable, why should we permit teachers employed by the State to deny the existence of God, whose name we stamp upon our coin—'In God We Trust'—or scoff at the Bible, which our President uses when he takes the oath of office?" Bryan went even further. He told the students at Northwestern University on the occasion of their class day exercises: "No teacher should be allowed on the faculty

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of any American university unless he is a Christian. And where the Bible is not taught, no other philosophy should be substituted."

Bryan was sometimes on the other side of the fence when the question of academic freedom arose many years before. He wrote in *The Commoner* in 1901 defending the right of college professors to teach what they believed to be right, when six professors resigned from Leland Stanford University because of the attempt of the widow of Senator Stanford to regulate their teaching. "It is a good sign," wrote Bryan in a *Commoner* editorial, "when the teacher rebels and surrenders his salary in preference to surrendering his principles." But this was a case of the wicked corporation influences and the wicked rich trying to dictate the educational policies of America. Bryan did not happen to favor the rich, but he did happen to be in favor of Christianity, and he wanted that system forced down the throats of his contemporaries at all costs, just as some rich men wanted their economic system forced down the throats of their contemporaries. In 1905 Bryan had resigned from the position of chairman of the board of trustees of Illinois College, his alma mater, because the college accepted a gift from Andrew Carnegie. "Our college," he wrote the trustees, "cannot serve God and Mammon." And he was more anxious to force it to serve God than Andrew Carnegie was to force it to serve Mammon. The college accepted the resignation of its distinguished son. Bryan also attacked Professor Münsterberg in 1905 because he claimed that the professor had taught a theory of monarchical government, and he demanded: "What shall we think of the propriety of the employment by a great American college of a professor who feels it his duty to belittle our principles of govern-

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ment and to praise monarchy? Is it strange that our heiresses are seeking titles abroad, when American colleges employ exponents of European ideas to instruct American youths?"

Deep down in his heart Bryan had an utter contempt for education, because it was undemocratic, and because he was, in spite of some years of formal instruction, uneducated. He lacked that rarest of intellectual virtues, speculating curiosity, and he was bitter in his denunciation of those who possessed it. "It is better," he wrote, "to trust in the Rock of Ages, than to know the age of the rocks; it is better for one to know that he is close to the Heavenly Father, than to know how far the stars in the heavens are apart." Bryan resented fiercely the activities of scientists in search of knowledge. He told the Legislature of West Virginia on April 13, 1923: "Men who would not cross the street to save a soul have traveled around the world in search of skeletons. If they find a stray tooth in a gravel pit, they hold a conclave and fashion a creature such as they suppose the possessor of the tooth to have been, and then they shout derisively at Moses." Bryan did not wish any one else to believe what he was afraid to believe, for he could not endure the thought that another might to that extent be superior to him. He had been the representative of the common man too long to enable him to acknowledge the value of intellectual leadership. He felt that the whole duty of man was to keep his ear to the ground and to report what he heard with masterful resonance. Bryan regarded leadership in the Church as he did leadership in knowledge. A preacher, he contended, should not be chosen because of powers of thought, but because he knew how to interpret the fixed laws handed down in the Bible with a certain becoming deftness. A man who preached, Bryan believed,

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should not tell what he thought but should rather think what his constituents wished to hear.

Feeling as strongly as he did about the dangers of teaching evolution and the obligation of the teacher to obey the hand that ruled his pay check, Bryan went about to State Legislatures and asked them to pass laws making the teaching of evolution a crime. He and his propagandist friends succeeded in persuading the Legislature of Florida to pass such a law. Kentucky escaped by only one vote, and Tennessee passed such a law in 1925. Then some men in Robinson's drug store in the small town of Dayton, Tennessee, decided that it would be interesting and important to test that law, and John Thomas Scopes, a teacher of biology, consented to be the defendant. The attention of the world was concentrated on Dayton, Tennessee, and Bryan, as the mouthpiece of the anti-evolution forces, consented to be one of the counsel for the prosecution.

Before considering the Dayton trial in detail, it is necessary to note that Bryan had not completely abandoned politics for religion. It was his ambition to become United States Senator from Florida in 1926. Bryan once said at a Democratic dinner that it had been his boyhood ambition to sit in the United States Senate, and, as we have seen, he was once an unsuccessful candidate for the Senate from Nebraska. Writing to the editor of the *Sanford Herald*, of Sanford, Florida, sometime in 1925, Bryan said:

"I dread the idea of taking on any additional load of care but I feel that this is my last opportunity to render a service to the party which has made me what I am and

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given me all I have. I regard a union of the South and West as the only hope of the party. Being a resident of the South and acquainted with the West, and having an influence, I believe I could render the party more service than I could in any other way and—if it does not seem like assuming too much,—I believe I can render the party more service than any other person now in the Senate or likely to be there during the next few years.

“Aside from this service that I can render to the party at large, I feel that I can be of service to Florida because of my intimate acquaintance with those who are in sympathy with Florida’s interests and development. In the last campaign I traveled through fifteen states at my own expense and gave nearly six weeks of my time to the campaign. No other Florida Democrat was in a position to do so much for the party in the nation.

“And it must not be overlooked that Florida has an interest in a national victory aside from her interest in the policies involved. The postmasters of Florida are appointed by the President and it would be of great benefit to our Democracy if it could supply the postmasters in the growing cities of Florida.

“For these reasons, it seems to me that the Democrats who gave me a large vote for delegate would be even more willing to give me a large vote for the Senate because my services as Senator would be very much greater than any service I could possibly render as delegate. If this matter strikes you favorably and you have an editorial along these lines, I wish you would send me a number of copies of the paper so I can send them to other papers that are friendly. The *Observer*, published by Chas. E. Jones of Tampa, has

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already had a very strong editorial which was reproduced and strongly endorsed by the Clay County *Times*.

"Very truly yours,

"W. J. BRYAN."¹

In another letter to the editor of *Labor*, of Washington, D. C., Bryan wrote: "The term in the Senate would enable me to help lay the foundations for the next Presidential campaign and for the Presidential campaign following. By that time, I would be seventy-two and I dare not look much beyond that time."

There was one other enterprise in which Bryan was interested during 1925 besides the anti-evolution movement, Florida real estate, and the United States Senatorship from Florida. In *Famous Figures of the Old Testament* Bryan had written: "What a place Jerusalem would be for tourists if Solomon's Temple were still there! When I visited the Holy City I was surprised to learn that but a small fraction of the tourists who go to Egypt are interested in the Holy Land. Not many thousands turn aside to visit the soil made sacred by the tread of the prophets and by the blood of the Saviour. It is a land of relics and of ruins. A few Jews wail by the walls of the Temple and a few pilgrims wander from place to place in search of the hallowed spots described in the Bible. There is controversy about nearly every point of interest, so that one is seldom sure that he is seeing the places that he came to see. If the Temple of Solomon were only there in all its beauty and magnificence, lovers of art would wend their way to it from every land." While he could not hope to rebuild Solomon's Temple, Bryan felt that he could do his bit for the Holy

¹ Bryan Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Packet 9.



"THE NEW EVANGELISM"

(From the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, March 29, 1925. By permission of the publishers.)

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Land. He planned, through the agency of a travel bureau, a great pilgrimage to the Holy Land to take place in the spring of 1926. A publicity agent was to go along, and the educational manager of the Intercollegiate Tours sent circulars and invitations to a list of people selected by Bryan from among his acquaintances.

There is among Bryan's papers in the Library of Congress a fragment of the rough draft of a prospectus drawn up for the contemplated pilgrimage to the Holy Land. It assured those to whom it was designed to appeal, "It is not necessary that the pilgrims who accompany should think as Mr. Bryan does on either politics or religion but it is highly desirable that they be sympathetic to a religious view of life, and to approach this experience with a sense of the spiritual values involved." The words "think as Mr. Bryan does" were crossed out, and in the margin was substituted "wholly agree with." The next paragraph assured prospective pilgrims, "It should be understood, however, that this pilgrimage is not a long-faced affair. There will be fun, and plenty of it wherever Mr. Bryan is," and added in the margin, apparently in Bryan's handwriting, was: "Be of good cheer was a phrase used by the Savior." "There is no doubt," said the draft prospectus, "that the pilgrims will form a brilliant company," and then this picture was drawn: "Added to this is the sheer delight of travel—the joy of sapphire seas, of rustling palms, of colorful towns climbing steeply from unfamiliar shores, of unaccustomed tongues, of strange faces and glances and gestures that reveal thoughts not like our thoughts; of walled towns that conjure up the past, of ruins that stare out of immemorial antiquity, of bare sequents of space eloquent

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of the grand personalities who once occupied them and made them forever memorable or sacred."

But the crowning inducement was the following: "Pilgrims may expect from Mr. Bryan a series of addresses that embody his beliefs and enthusiasms and that are wholly appropriate to the places visited. Among them will be an address on 'Abraham' at a spot made sacred by his presence, an address on Mars Hill at Athens, an oration delivered on the rostrum where Demosthenes thundered against the Macedonian, another in the great stone theater at Ephesus where occurred the uproar over the Apostle Paul; in connection with our traversing the land of Goshen, an appreciation of the career of Moses; over the manger at Bethlehem his famous oration on the Prince of Peace; Good Friday in the Garden of Gethsemane, an interpretation of the Passion; at dawn on Easter morning, a service beside the Garden Tomb, and in the afternoon on the summit of Olivet, the Great Commission.

"In addition during the voyages, Mr. Bryan will hold his usual Sunday Bible classes."¹

But the plans for this great pilgrimage were interrupted by the demands of the religious crusade against Darwin's theory of evolution created by the efforts of some men in the town of Dayton, Tennessee, to break the law.

II

In the spring of 1925 four men were sitting in Robinson's drug store on the main street of Dayton, Tennessee, discussing the recent anti-evolution law passed by the State Legislature of Tennessee. Two of them were lawyers, one of them was a chemical engineer, George W. Rappleyea,

¹ Bryan Papers, Library of Congress, Packet 9.

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manager of the Cumberland Coal and Iron Company, and the third was John T. Scopes, an instructor of biology in the county high school. The engineer, Mr. Rappleyea, gave it as his opinion that "the best way to find God was in the laboratory of the biologist, and the open book of the geologist." Scopes remarked that he "could not see how a man could teach the theories of biology from the state text-books and escape bringing in a general discussion of the theory of evolution." Mr. Rappleyea took down from a shelf a copy of *A Civic Biology* by Professor George W. Hunter, for the country drug store was also the school book store. He asked Scopes whether he followed Professor Hunter's text in his classroom, and Scopes answered that he did. Mr. Rappleyea suggested that in that case Scopes was guilty of violating the anti-evolution statute and ought to be arrested and tried. He urged Scopes to test the law by consenting to be arrested. At first Scopes was reluctant. He did not enjoy publicity. But he finally consented, and the next day a warrant was sworn out by Rappleyea for the arrest of Scopes. Then Rappleyea sent a telegram to the American Civil Liberties Union in New York City asking that organization for support of Scopes's case. Scopes was arrested on May 9, 1925, and held for action by the Rhea County Grand Jury. On May 25 the grand jury returned an indictment against Scopes charging him with violating the State's anti-evolution statute, and Judge J. T. Raulston called a special term of the Rhea County Circuit Court to hear the case on July 10.

The lawyers for the State of Tennessee communicated with Bryan and asked him to be one of the counsel for the prosecution. He consented, and then Clarence Darrow, an eminent lawyer of Chicago, consented to head the defense

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counsel, which also included Arthur Garfield Hays and Dudley Field Malone, of New York and Judge Neal, of Tennessee. Besides Mr. Bryan the State's counsel consisted of Bryan's son, W. J. Bryan, Jr., Attorney-General Stewart, B. G. McKenzie, and the two Hicks brothers of Dayton, Tennessee, who had been connected with the start of the case.

As soon as the news was published that a man was to be tried in Dayton, Tennessee, in July, 1925, for teaching Darwin's theory of evolution, the attention of the whole world was centered on the case. Some of the inhabitants of Chattanooga, Tennessee, realized that Dayton was about to receive a great deal of free advertising, and they decided to rush through a test case of their own for the glory of Chattanooga before the Dayton trial could take place. A meeting was called in Dayton to protest against this attempt to steal the town's publicity. At the meeting Mr. Rappleyea gave a short talk on evolution, and a barber in the audience rushed up to the platform and hit Mr. Rappleyea, because he maintained that Mr. Rappleyea's remarks were a personal reflection upon his family. Soon afterward one of Dayton's two policemen met Mr. Rappleyea in a store. He asked him to sit down, and when he had sat down struck him.

Dayton made great preparations for the "monkey trial," as it soon began to be called in the newspapers. Dayton had a population of 1,800 persons, and hitherto the town had been noted chiefly for its strawberry crop, for at the time of the trial it was the boast that Dayton had that year "shipped more strawberries than any community on earth." As the time for the trial approached the town was crowded with evangelists, "hot dog" vendors, curiosity

"ME AND MY BOY FRIEND"—



(Copyright, 1925, by Wheeler-Nicholson Press Service.)

"Me and the boy friend, the boy friend and me,"
"We stick together like sap to the tree."

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seekers, traveling performers, ice cream cone salesmen and newspaper correspondents. A blind minstrel with a portable organ, Will Grissom, sang "How Beautiful Heaven Must Be" and collected coins for his talent. Another blind man down the street, Charley Oaks, played a guitar and mouth organ, and he sang to the tune of "Frankie and Johnnie":

"Hindenburg said to the Kaiser,
'You'd better get your gun.'
The Kaiser said to Hindenburg,
'Just give me room to run—
I see the boys of your Uncle Sam.'"

One man, dressed in an opera hat, an alpaca coat, and secondhand policeman's trousers, sold religious pamphlets, but was not very successful. He had come all the way from Georgia in a bungalow on wheels. He made a speech on the street in which he expounded the theory that the negro was not human, but he was not listened to for long. There was enough religious prejudice in town on which to concentrate without any additional mental burden of race prejudice. Bryan's books were also on sale, but there were not many purchasers. The price had something to do with the slack sale, for the book salesman reported that his best seller was a fifty-cent volume entitled *Puddle to Paradise* by B. H. Shadduck, Ph.D., author of *Jocko-Homo Heaven-bound*.

The monkey motif was everywhere. Robinson's drug store sold a Monkey Fizz. The city market announced, "We handle all kinds of meat except monkey," and a local druggist advised the visitors, "Don't monkey around when you come to Dayton, but call on us." The Progressive Day-

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ton Club pointed out to local merchants that posters showing monkeys swinging from cocoanut trees with facetious captions underneath probably would not be good for business, and after the trial began, most of these were removed from store windows. But two live chimpanzees were brought to Dayton by their trainers, Harry Backenstahl and Zack Miller. The owners offered them to the defense as exhibits, but when Mr. Darrow and Mr. Malone assured the animal trainers that they were not using exhibits, the chimpanzees were placed on exhibition in an empty store, where the trainers used them to illustrate a lecture attacking the theory of evolution. Mr. Bryan was said to have attended one of these lectures. The *New York Times* reported: "William Jennings Bryan arrived soon after the doors were opened and gazed speculatively at the chimpanzee in his one-ton cage, while Hubbard Nye, one of Zack's scientists, expounded the theory of the anthropoid's come-down in the world. 'I hate, even as Tennessee has already said, to think that we are descended from one of those beasts,' said Mr. Nye. 'I have studied them for years, and I have come to the conclusion, supported by scientific and demonstrable fact, that Darwin was wrong. We did not evolve upward from the anthropoid. Instead, the anthropoid is the product of man who went down—he devolved. It's devolution, and this chimpanzee is the refutation of the Darwinian theory.' Mr. Bryan's eyes sparkled as he gazed at the chimpanzee. 'Wonderful!' he said. 'Wonderful!'"

On the streets of Dayton various religious signs had been painted. One fence bore the advice: "Sweethearts, come to Jesus." Another sign read: "The sweetheart love of Jesus Christ and Paradise Street is at hand. Do you want to be a sweet angel? Forty days of prayer. Itemize your sins and

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iniquities for eternal life. If you come clean, God will talk back to you in voice." A large poster in Robinson's drug store read, "You Need God in Your Business."

When Bryan arrived, he was met at the station by W. D. Lilliard, one of his ardent political and religious supporters, who had in his hand a bunch of radishes which he had raised especially for the occasion. The night of his arrival Bryan made a speech at a dinner given to him by the Progressive Dayton Club, which also gave a dinner for Clarence Darrow. "Why should the size of the town be a matter of importance in the trial of a religious case?" Bryan asked. "Christianity began in a small town, whether we date the beginning with the birth of Christ in Bethlehem or with the youth of Christ spent in Nazareth. . . . The newspaper critics who have been making fun of Dayton should read at the front page of the book that gave rise to this trial. The biology which the defendant was teaching has as its frontispiece a picture of a crowded city street and just below the picture of a farm house on a quiet country road. Beneath the two pictures is a suggestion upon which the city editors might reflect with profit. This is the comment that the author of the book makes upon the two pictures contrasted: 'Compare the unfavorable artificial environment of a crowded city with the more favorable environment of the country.'" Then he told his audience: "The contest between evolution and Christianity is a duel to the death. It has been in the past a death grapple in the dark; from this time on it will be a death grapple in the light." "If evolution wins," he cried, "Christianity goes—not suddenly, of course, but gradually, for the two cannot stand together." "Shall the people rule?" Bryan asked. "If not, who shall?"

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Bryan received hundreds of telegrams from all over the country praising his stand on evolution, and he must have received many of abuse, but none of the latter are among his papers in the Library of Congress. Billy Sunday, the evangelist, wrote to Bryan on the Fourth of July, 1925, from Hood River, Oregon:

"Dear friend:

"I have been away just returned— Thank God for *W.J.B.* Sorry I cannot be there:

"I hasten to send you some ideas that may suggest a line of thought.

"Danl. Webster said 'any attempt to educate the people without giving them at the same time religion and moral sentiment is low, vulgar deism and infidelity.'

"The compact in the cabin of the *Mayflower* was for the Glory of God and the advancement of the Christian religion.

"Atheism is a public enemy. Evolution is atheism.

"I do not believe a man can be an Evolutionist and a Christian same time.

"Natural evolution is always downward not up.

"If man evolved from a monkey why are there any monkeys left. Why didn't they all evolve into humans?

"If we should take the first specimens of a monkey and breed and train them for thousands of years we would have nothing but monkeys now.

"Evolutionists seem set on ejecting God from the Universe and destroying the authority of the Bible.

"Wendell Phillips said

"The answer to the shasta is India

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"The answer to the Koran is Turkey ["China" scratched out]

"The answer to Confucianism is China

"The answer to the Bible is America

"Evolutionists say 100,000 species come from 4 species

"The law of the Universe tells us that starting in one species it keeps on in that species. If there were only 4 to start with there would be only 4 now. There has never been a case of progression upwards.

"If cells did not maintain their ancestral characteristics they would have perished ages ago.

"Prof. Agassiz said he found in a reef in Florida the remains of insects thousands of years old. They were the same as the insects found there now.

"I hope you may find a thought in the enclosed. All the believing world is back of you in your defense of God and Christ and the Bible.

"Your friend,

"As Ever,

"W. A. SUNDAY." ¹

Aimee Semple McPherson telegraphed to Bryan:

TEN THOUSAND MEMBERS OF ANGELUS TEMPLE WITH
HER MISSIONS OF RADIO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP SEND GRATE-
FUL APPRECIATION OF YOUR LION-HEARTED CHAMPIONSHIP
OF THE BIBLE AGAINST EVOLUTION AND THROW OUR HATS
IN THE RING WITH YOU FOR GOD AND THE BIBLE AS IS STOP
CONSTANT PRAYER DURING WEEK ALL NIGHT PRAYER SAT-
URDAY NIGHT STOP SUNDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE PARADE MASS
MEETING AND TRIAL WITH HANGING AND BURIAL OF
MONKEY TEACHERS TENNESSEE CAN COUNT ON US.

AIMEE SEMPLE MC PHERSON.

¹ Bryan Papers, Library of Congress, Packet 9.

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A telegram from Smackover, Arkansas, read:

WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

CARE COURT HOUSE DAYTON TENN

MY DEAR BROTHER BRYAN FIGHT THEM EVOLUTIONS
UNTIL HELL FREEZES OVER AND THEN GIVE THEM A ROUND
ON THE ICE GOD BLESS YOU IN YOUR TIME OF TRIALS AND
GIVE YOU WISDOM AND GRACE TO DO WHAT DEAR JESUS
WILL SMILE UPON YOUR UNACQUAINTED BROTHER

HAPPY GORDON MEAD

Other telegrams quoted Scripture passages to cheer Bryan on in his fight, and one evangelist telegraphed him that he was the St. Paul of the twentieth century. Church and Sunday school congregations all over the country assured him that they were praying night and day for his victory against the forces of darkness.

The first business of the Scopes trial was the selection of a jury. This was accomplished easily enough from among the farmers and men of the neighborhood. Darrow, examining one juror, asked, "Mr. Smith, do you know anything about evolution?" "I do not; no, sir," was the answer. "You would like to find out, would you?" asked Darrow. "I ain't wanting nothing about it," was the answer. Upon further examination Mr. Smith said, "I have read the Bible right smart."

The second day of the trial the court opened with a prayer by the Rev. Moffett, who begged the indirect question of the case somewhat in his very first sentences, when he prayed, "Oh, God, our Father, Thou who are the creator of the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them, Thou who are the preserver and controller of all things, Thou who wilt bring out all things to Thy glory in

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the end, we thank Thee this morning that Thou dost not only fill the heavens, but Thou dost also fill the earth." When court opened on the third day, Clarence Darrow objected to opening each session with a prayer. The Judge overruled his objection on the grounds that it had always been his custom to open his court with a prayer whenever a minister was available. Judge Raulston was an avowed fundamentalist, and he had held revival meetings in the neighborhood of Dayton a few weeks before he presided over the Scopes trial. "I do not object to the jury or any one else praying in secret or in private," Clarence Darrow said, "but I do object to the turning of this court room into a meetinghouse in the trial of this case. You have no right to do it." Darrow maintained that since this case was one of a conflict between science and religion, there should be no attempt to influence the jury by prayer. Attorney-General Stewart denied that the Scopes case was a case of a conflict between science and religion, and he insisted that it was "a case involving the fact as to whether or not a school-teacher has taught a doctrine prohibited by statute." He said that the prosecution thought it proper to open the court proceedings with prayer, if the judge so desired, "and," he added, "such an idea extended by the agnostic counsel for the defense is foreign to the thoughts and ideas of the people who do not know anything about infidelity and care less." This statement started the first lawyers' quarrel of the case. Arthur Garfield Hays, of the defense, objected to the phrase "agnostic counsel for the defense," and Dudley Field Malone replied to this remark of the Attorney-General by pointing out that he personally was not an agnostic and was one of the counsel for the defense. Mr. Malone also pointed out that prayers in the court room

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"help to increase the atmosphere of hostility to our point of view, which already exists in this community by widespread propaganda." This statement made Attorney-General Stewart very angry, and he replied, "So far as creating an atmosphere of hostility is concerned, I would advise Mr. Malone that this is a God-fearing country." "And it is no more God-fearing country than that from which I came," said Mr. Malone. "Gentlemen, do not turn this into an argument," the Judge ordered.

This was the first outbreak of one of the underlying currents of the whole case. We have already seen that Bryan as soon as he arrived in Dayton announced himself as the defender of the honest country yeoman against the sophisticated city dweller. All through the trial there were indications that besides being a case of God vs. Darwin, of State of Tennessee vs. John Thomas Scopes, this was a case of Rural vs. Urban. As much as Judge Raulston tried to keep it a case of the State of Tennessee vs. John T. Scopes, he could not prevent frequent outbreaks of sectional hostility, as we shall see. The Judge finally ruled that he would have his prayers; Mr. Darrow took an exception, and the case went on.

The State simply proved that John T. Scopes had taught the theory of evolution in a high school of Rhea County, Tennessee. For this purpose they called a fourteen-year-old student in Scopes' class, Howard Morgan, who, with superb simplicity, told what Scopes taught him of the origin of life:

"Gen. Stewart: Just state in your own words, Howard, what he taught you and when it was.

"A. It was along about the 2d of April.

"Q. Of this year?

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"A. Yes, sir; of this year. He said that the earth was once a hot molten mass, too hot for plant or animal life to exist upon it; in the sea the earth cooled off; there was a little germ of one cell organism formed, and this organism kept evolving until it got to be a pretty good-sized animal, and then came on to be a land animal, and it kept on evolving, and from this was man."

Darrow asked the boy: "It has not hurt you any, has it?" "No, sir," he answered.

The act passed by the legislature of the State of Tennessee read: "Be it Enacted, by the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, that it shall be unlawful for any teacher in any of the universities, normals, and all other public schools in the State, which are supported in whole or in part by the public school funds of the State, to teach any theory that denies the story of the divine creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals." The prosecution maintained that once it had proved that Scopes taught the theory of evolution, it had proved that he was guilty of violating the statute, but the defense maintained first that the statute was unconstitutional, and the judge denied their motion to quash the indictment on that ground. Then the defense set up an elaborate argument to prove that the theory of evolution did not deny the story of the divine creation of man as taught in the Bible because it had nothing to do with the Bible. This involved expert testimony on exactly what the theory of evolution was and exactly what the Bible was. Dudley Field Malone summed up the argument for the defense when he said that the prosecution must prove not only that Scopes had "taught the theory of evolution, but that he also, and at the same

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time, denied the theory of creation as set forth in the Bible." "We maintain," said Malone, "that since the Defendant Scopes has been indicted under a statute which prohibits the teaching of the evolutionary theory, the prosecution must prove as part of its case what evolution is." He then admitted, in order to eliminate misunderstanding, that "the defense believes there is a direct conflict between the theory of evolution and the theories of creation as set forth in the Book of Genesis." And he also admitted that the defense believed that the stories of creation as set forth in the Bible were neither reconcilable nor scientifically correct. Then he brought in Mr. Bryan: "While the defense thinks there is a conflict between evolution and the Old Testament, we believe there is no conflict between evolution and Christianity. There may be a conflict between evolution and the peculiar ideas of Christianity, which are held by Mr. Bryan as the evangelical leader of the prosecution, but we deny that the evangelical leader of the prosecution is an authorized spokesman for the Christians of the United States. The defense maintains that there is a clear distinction between God, the church, the Bible, Christianity, and Mr. Bryan." It was unfortunate for Mr. Malone's argument that in its statute the State of Tennessee begged the entire question by stating that it was prohibited to teach in the schools of Tennessee "any theory that denies the story of the divine creation of man as taught in the Bible." This would include in its ban Darwin's theory, the stork theory, and the sugar-on-the-window theory.

"The narrow purpose of the defense," said Mr. Malone, "is to establish the innocence of the defendant Scopes. The broad purpose of the defense will be to prove that the Bible

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is a work of religious aspiration and rules of conduct which must be kept in the field of theology.

"The defense maintains that there is no more justification for imposing the conflicting views of the Bible on courses of biology than there would be for imposing the views of biologists on courses of comparative religion. We maintain that science and religion embrace two separate and distinct fields of thought and learning."

The place to maintain that, however, was in the Legislature of Tennessee before the law was passed, and the judge decided that he would not permit expert testimony to prove what the theory of evolution was and what the Bible was. Arthur Brisbane summed the matter up when he wrote: "The learned judge in the monkey trial says scientific experts must not be heard—a wise decision. If a great state has decided by law that twice two are five it would be foolish to allow mathematicians to testify."

But the attention of the world was not concentrated on the case for the purpose of discerning whether Scopes taught something out of a biology book. The world was interested in the arguments, extraneous to the point at issue, as to whether in 1925 a State of the United States would be permitted to prohibit the teaching of evolution, as to whether Mr. Bryan with his terrified longings for immortality would be able to conquer the forces which were interested in the development of knowledge. Bryan was not opposing religious freedom; he was opposing education. He maintained that the public schools should teach only what the majority of the taxpayers wished to learn. He did not believe that men should be compelled to worship as he did—much as he would have wished that happy consummation—nor did

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he believe that men should not be permitted to believe in the theory of evolution. He merely insisted that since his followers were not permitted to teach their theology in the public schools, the biologists must not be permitted to teach their theory of evolution in the public schools, for Bryan and his followers had become convinced that children were turned from theology by biology. As such they had a case that on the surface sounded fair to many minds, but which was fundamentally barbarous if one happened to believe in freedom of education on all subjects. And Bryan's people were not really as badly off as the forces of science, for they had their Sunday schools and their other propaganda outlets for their theories, while, if they succeeded in confining evolution to special teaching, which was their object, it would be practically impossible to teach it, for it was not practical to send children every Monday to Evolution School. Bryan kept shouting to his lecture audiences that the evolutionists should be forced to form their own atheistic schools, and he also suggested—and he thought it amusing—that those who believed in evolution should not call themselves Christians, but rather “The Ancient and Honorable Order of Apes.”

Mr. Sue K. Hicks, one of the lawyers for the State, said: “We are not endeavoring to run here a teachers’ institute; we do not want to make out of this a high school or college; we do not object for these foreign gentlemen, as they please to call themselves—

“The Court: Do not call them that.

“Mr. Hicks: They call themselves that.

“Mr. Malone: That is all right.

“The Court: That is all right.

“Mr. Hicks: We do not object to them coming into

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Tennessee and putting up a college, we will give them the ground to put the college on. If they want to educate the people of Tennessee as they say they do, but this is a court of law, it is not a court of instruction for the mass of humanity at large. They, themselves, admit that it is their purpose, your honor, to enlighten the people of Tennessee. . . .

"If they want to make a school down here in Tennessee to educate our poor ignorant people, let them establish a school out here; let them bring down their great experts. The people of Tennessee do not object to that, but we do object to them making a school house or a teachers' institute out of this court. Such procedure in Tennessee is unknown. I do not know how about where these foreign gentlemen come from, but I say this in defense of the state, although I think it is unnecessary, the most ignorant man in Tennessee is a highly educated, polished gentleman compared to the most ignorant man in some of our Northern States, because of the fact that the ignorant man in Tennessee is a man without an opportunity, but the men in our Northern States, the Northern man in some of our larger Northern cities, have the opportunity without the brain. (*Laughter.*)"

Try as they would, the Judge, the lawyers for the prosecution, and the lawyers for the defense could not prevent constant outbreaks of the indirect issue of the case, the conflict between the sophistication of the large city and the simplicity of the lowly yeoman. All during the trial the attorneys broke out in angry comments on each other's place of residence. Most of these, it is true, came from the defenders of Tennessee. After Mr. Sue K. Hicks's ardent defense of the yeomanry of the State, General McKenzie, also

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of counsel for the prosecution, arose and said: "May it please your honor, I do not want to be heard but a very few moments. I want to say this, since the beginning of this lawsuit, and since I began to meet these distinguished gentlemen, I have begun to love them—every one—and it is a very easy task, in fact, it was a case, when I met Col. Darrow—a case of love at first sight. These other gentlemen come right on, but you know they wiggled around so rapidly that I could not get my lover turned loose on them until I got a chance, but I love the great men. The newspapers have some of them said, that McKenzie is waving the bloody shirt. I just want to make this explanation. I have referred to the great metropolitan city, and to these distinguished gentlemen being from New York, for this reason, we have some of our own boys up there.

"Mr. Malone: You bet you have.

"Gen. McKenzie: From the South, we have Martin W. Littleton, I guess these gentlemen admire him. We do. We feel proud of him. We think he is so smart that he scintillates—stands at the very head of his profession, and I thought that I was paying the gentlemen a compliment, I never meant anything about it. This is our country from one ocean to the other, and from New York to that section away down where we can bathe our feet in the Gulf of Mexico and all our possessions, and you know this, the thing of bathing your feet ought to be a good thing, it would save the use of selling so much of this antifoat sweat."

In the speech which he did not get a chance to deliver in the court room, Bryan said: "I appreciate the sturdy honesty and independence of those who come into daily contact with the earth, who, living near to nature, worship nature's God, and who, dealing with the myriad mysteries of earth

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and air, seek to learn from revelation about the Bible's wonder-working God. I admire the stern virtues, the vigilance and the patriotism of the class from which the jury is drawn, and am reminded of the lines of Scotland's immortal bard, which, when changed but slightly, describe your country's confidence in you:

“ ‘O Scotia, my dear, my native soil!

For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent,

Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil

Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content!

And, oh, may Heav'n their simple lives prevent

From luxury's contagion, weak and vile!

Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,

A virtuous populace may rise the while,

And stand a wall of fire around their much-loved isle.’ ”

During the first days of the trial Bryan was practically silent. One of the great events, for which everybody in the packed, hot court room was waiting, was the expected speech of the Great Commoner. When Dudley Field Malone quoted from a former speech of Bryan's in which he had agreed with Jefferson that “truth is great and will prevail if left to herself,” and that “errors cease to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them,” the Attorney-General objected to bringing Mr. Bryan's personal views into the case. The court sustained the objection and ruled that Bryan's name be eliminated from the record, but Bryan himself said, “The court can do as it pleases in carrying out its rules; but I ask no protection from the court, and when the proper time comes I shall be able to show the gentlemen that I stand today just where I did, but that this has nothing to do with the case at bar.” There

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was loud applause, and the Judge warned the audience that, the jury being present, he could not tolerate any expressions of feeling.

On the first Sunday in Dayton Bryan delivered two sermons, one in the Methodist Episcopal Church South in the morning and the second in the afternoon on the lawn of the courthouse. Judge Raulston and his daughters attended the church sermon. Bryan was greeted with applause when he entered the church. Among other things he said: "While God does not despise the learned, He does not give them a monopoly of His attention. The unlearned in this country are much more numerous than the learned.

"I am an enthusiast for education, but we have to deal with conditions as they are. A religion that didn't appeal to any but college graduates would be over the head or under the feet of 99 per cent. of the people. The God I worship is the God of the ignorant as well as the God of the learned man.

"Thank God I am going to spend the latter years of my life in a locality where there is a belief in God, and in the Son of God, and in a civilization to be based on salvation through blood."

Bryan, sixty-five years old, was showing painful signs of decay. H. L. Mencken, who attended the Dayton trial, wrote this description of him: "It was plain to every one who knew him, when he came to Dayton, that his great days were behind him—that, for all the fury of his hatred, he was now definitely an old man, and headed at last for silence. There was a vague, unpleasant manginess about his appearance; he somehow seemed dirty, though a close glance showed him as carefully shaven as an actor, and clad in immaculate linen. All the hair was gone from the



Photos by International Newsreel.

THE LAST MESSAGE

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dome of his head, and it had begun to fall out, too, behind his ears, in the obscene manner of the late Samuel Gompers. The resonance had departed from his voice; what was once a bugle blast had become reedy and quavering. Who knows that, like Demosthenes, he had a lisp? In the old days, under the magic of his eloquence, no one noticed it. But when he spoke at Dayton it was always audible. . . .

“By the end of the week he was simply a walking fever. Hour by hour he grew more bitter. What the Christian Scientists call malicious animal magnetism seemed to radiate from him like heat from a stove. From my place in the court room, standing upon a table, I looked directly down upon him, sweating horribly and pumping his palm-leaf fan. His eyes fascinated me; I watched them all day long. They were blazing points of hatred. They glittered like occult and sinister gems. Now and then they wandered to me, and I got my share, for my reports of the trial had come back to Dayton, and he had read them. It was like coming under fire.”

At last, on the fifth day, Bryan rose to speak. The expectation was great; it was generally supposed that he would surpass his Cross of Gold oration. The occasion of his speech was the argument against the admission of expert testimony on evolution and the Bible. Bryan first told the court why he had not spoken before, giving as his reason that the questions of law were presented by people who could present them better than he could. He said that he had been tempted to speak, but that he had been able to resist the temptation, even in face of the fact that his name had been drawn into the case by all the attorneys for the defense. “The principal attorney,” he said, “has often suggested that I am the arch-conspirator and that I am re-

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sponsible for the presence of this case and I have almost been credited with leadership of the ignorance and bigotry which he thinks could alone inspire a law like this." Bryan stood before the bar of the court in his shirt sleeves, while Mrs. Bryan sat in her wheel-chair and listened to her husband's arguments.

Bryan went on to argue: "This is not the place to try to prove that the law ought never to have been passed. The place to prove that, or teach that, was to the legislature." He pointed out that New York, "the one from which this impulse comes to resist this law," would resent it if attorneys were sent into that State to convince the people that they should not have passed a law repealing the enforcement of prohibition. Bryan then pointed out that the law of the Legislature of the State of Tennessee supplanted Hunter's *Biology*, and that Scopes should not have taught from that book. Then he discussed evolution and regaled his audience with what he considered witticisms. He asked for a copy of Hunter's *Biology*: "On page 194, we have a diagram, and this diagram purports to give some one's family tree. Not only his ancestors but his collateral relatives. We are told just how many animal species there are, 518,900. And in this diagram, beginning with the protozoa, we have the animals classified. We have circles differing in size according to the number of species in them and we have the guess that they give.

"Of course it is only a guess, and I don't suppose it is carried to a one or even to ten. I see they are round numbers, and I don't think all of these animals breed in round numbers, and so I think it must be a generalization of them. (*Laughter in the court room.*)

"The Court: Let us have order.

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"Mr. Bryan: 8,000 protozoa, 3,500 sponges.

"I am satisfied from some I have seen there must be more than 35,000 sponges. (*Laughter in the court room.*)

And then we run down to the insects, 360,000 insects. Two-thirds of all the species of all the animal world are insects. And sometimes, in the summer time we feel that we become intimately acquainted with them. A large percentage of the species are mollusks and fishes. Now we are getting up near our kinfolks, 13,000 fishes. Then there are the amphibia. I don't know whether they have not yet decided to come out, or have almost decided to go back. (*Laughter in the court room.*)

"But they seem to be somewhat at home in both elements. And then we have the reptiles, 3,500; and then we have 13,000 birds. Strange that this should be exactly the same as the number of fishes, round numbers. And then we have mammals, 3,500, and there is a little circle and man is in the circle, find him, find man.

"There is that book! There is the book they were teaching your children, that man was a mammal and so indistinguishable among the mammals that they leave him there with thirty-four hundred and ninety-nine other mammals. (*Laughter and applause.*) Including elephants. (*Laughter.*)

"Talk about putting Daniel in the lion's den! How dare those scientists put man in a little ring like that with lions and tigers and everything that is bad! Not only the evolution is possible, but the scientists possibly think of shutting man up in a little circle like that with all these animals that have an odor that extends beyond the circumference of this circle, my friends. (*Extended laughter.*)"

In the extended laughter many of his hearers forgot to note that Bryan had played his cheapest trick. He had taken

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approximate figures of species and made them into definite numbers of population.

Bryan then went on to tell those in the court room the dangers to children of pulling man down from the throne of God. He quoted from Darwin's *The Descent of Man* and used what he had used before on the lecture platform and was therefore sure would get a laugh: "Not even from American monkeys, but from old world monkeys. (*Laughter.*)" Bryan said, "Now, my friends—I beg pardon, if the court please, I have been so in the habit of talking to an audience instead of a court, that I will sometimes say 'my friends,' although I happen to know not all of them are my friends. (*Laughter.*)"

In his speech Bryan asked the defense to brace itself for a shock and then announced that he was a member of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science, and he also pointed out with pride that he had more degrees than the scientist witness of the defense. He neglected to mention that most of his were honorary. He then quoted Darrow on the effect of reading Nietzsche on Leopold and Loeb, the two Chicago students whom Darrow had defended against the charge of murder. Mr. Darrow objected strenuously to the attempt of Bryan to inject that case into the Scopes case, but Bryan was permitted by Judge Raulston to read from Darrow's speech to the jury in the Leopold-Loeb murder trial. The court permitted Bryan considerable latitude, for it was generally recognized that his was a speech rather than an argument, and the trial was beginning, imperceptibly, to take on the character of a mock trial and debate, which everybody expected it to acquire, and which everybody was hoping for.

Bryan got back to his original argument against expert

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testimony for a moment when he said: "Now, your Honor, when it comes to Bible experts, do they think that they can bring them in here to instruct the members of the jury, eleven of whom are members of the church? I submit that of the eleven members of the jury, more of the jurors are experts on what the Bible is than any Bible expert who does not subscribe to the true spiritual influences, or spiritual discernments of what our Bible says. (*Voice in audience, 'Amen!'*)"

"Mr. Bryan (*continuing*): And the man may discuss the Bible all he wants to, but he does not find out anything about the Bible until he accepts God and the Christ of whom He tells.

"Mr. Darrow: I hope the reporters got the amens in the record. I want somewhere, at some point, to find some court where a picture of this will be painted. (*Laughter.*)"

Bryan went on to protest that this was not a mock trial: "This is not a convocation brought here to allow men to come and stand for a time in the limelight, and speak to the world from the platform at Dayton." "The facts are simple," he ended, "the case is plain, and if those gentlemen want to enter upon a larger field of educational work on the subject of evolution, let us get through with this case and then convene a mock court, for it will deserve the title of mock court if its purpose is to banish from the hearts of the people the Word of God as revealed. (*Great applause.*)"

Bryan's speech was a great disappointment. There was not in it a "cross of gold" or "crown of thorns" or even a "pillar of fire by night and pillar of cloud by day." He had been applauded, but he had not aroused his hearers to the pitch of emotional hysteria at which he usually aimed.

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He was old, and, much as he ranted and roared, he could not quite arouse the enthusiasm required. Mr. Mencken reported that "he bit right and left, like a dog with rabies."

After a recess Dudley Field Malone made a speech that stirred the audience more than Bryan had succeeded in doing. He told them that it was Mr. Bryan who had injected "foreigners" into this case, and that it was only after he and Mr. Darrow had heard that Bryan intended to appear as counsel for the prosecution that they offered their services to the defense. Bryan had also stated that the battle would be "a duel to the death." Mr. Malone ended with this passionate statement of the defense's intellectual position: "We want everything we have to say on religion and on science told and we are ready to submit our theories to the direct and cross-examination of the prosecution. We have come in here ready for a battle. We have come in here for this duel. I don't know anything about dueling, your Honor. It is against the law of God. It is against the church. It is against the law of Tennessee, but does the opposition mean by duel that our defendant shall be strapped to a board and that they alone shall carry the sword, is our only weapon to be taken from us, so that the duel will be entirely one-sided? That isn't my idea of a duel. Moreover it isn't going to be a duel.

"There is never a duel with the truth. The truth always wins and we are not afraid of it. The truth is no coward. The truth does not need the law. The truth does not need the forces of government. The truth does not need Mr. Bryan. The truth is imperishable, eternal, and immortal and needs no human agency to support it. We are ready to tell the truth as we understand it and we do not fear all the truth that they can present as facts. We are ready. We

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feel we stand with progress. We feel we stand with science. We feel we stand with intelligence. We feel we stand with fundamental freedom in America. We are not afraid. Where is the fear? We meet it, where is the fear? We defy it, we ask your Honor to admit the evidence as a matter of correct law, as a matter of sound procedure and as a matter of justice to the defense in this case. (*Profound and continued applause.*)” The Judge, however, ruled that the expert testimony was not admissible.

The great scene of the trial, however, was yet to come. On the seventh day of the trial the defense was still submitting expert testimony on evolution and the Bible. Mr. Hays told the court that the defense desired to call William Jennings Bryan as a witness. He said that he wished Mr. Bryan’s testimony as part of the record, “even if your Honor thinks it is not admissible in general.” Since they were merely making a record for appeal, the Judge finally said, “Call anybody you desire. Ask them any questions you wish.” Just before Clarence Darrow began to cross-examine Bryan, he asked the court that a sign ten feet long with huge letters “Read Your Bible” be removed from in front of the jury. Mr. McKenzie objected to the removal of the sign. “I have never seen the time in the history of this country,” he said, “when any man should be afraid to be reminded of the fact that he should read his Bible, and if they should represent a force that is aligned with the devil and his satellites—” Mr. Malone jumped to his feet and objected to such language. “Finally I say,” Mr. McKenzie continued, “when that time comes that then is time for us to tear up all of the Bibles, throw them in the fire, and let the country go to hell.” The Judge ordered Mr. McKenzie’s remarks to be expunged from the record.

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Malone remarked: "Yes, I think it is all right for the individual members of the prosecution to make up their minds as to what forces we represent. I have a right to assume I have as much chance of heaven as they have, to reach it by my own goal, and my understanding of the Bible and of Christianity, and I will be a pretty poor Christian when I get any biblical or Christian or religious views from any member of the prosecution that I have yet heard from during this trial. (*Applause and laughter.*)" Court Officer Kelso Rice rapped for order and said: "People, this is no circus. There are no monkeys up here. This is a lawsuit; let us have order." Then Bryan made an unctuous little speech, in which he said, "If leaving that up there during the trial makes our brother to offend, I would take it down during the trial."

Just the day before there had been another outbreak of temper between Clarence Darrow and Judge Raulston. Darrow said: "We want to make statements here of what we expect to prove. I do not understand why every request of the State and every suggestion of the prosecution should meet with an endless waste of time, and a bare suggestion of anything that is perfectly competent on our part should be immediately overruled." "I hope," said Judge Raulston, "you do not mean to reflect upon the court?" Mr. Darrow: "Well, your Honor has the right to hope." "I have the right to do something else, perhaps," said the Judge. "All right; all right," said Mr. Darrow. The Judge cited Darrow in contempt of court next day, but later in the day Darrow apologized, and the Judge, declaring that he believed in the principles of Christ, forgave him. The court then adjourned to the lawn because the Judge was afraid that the

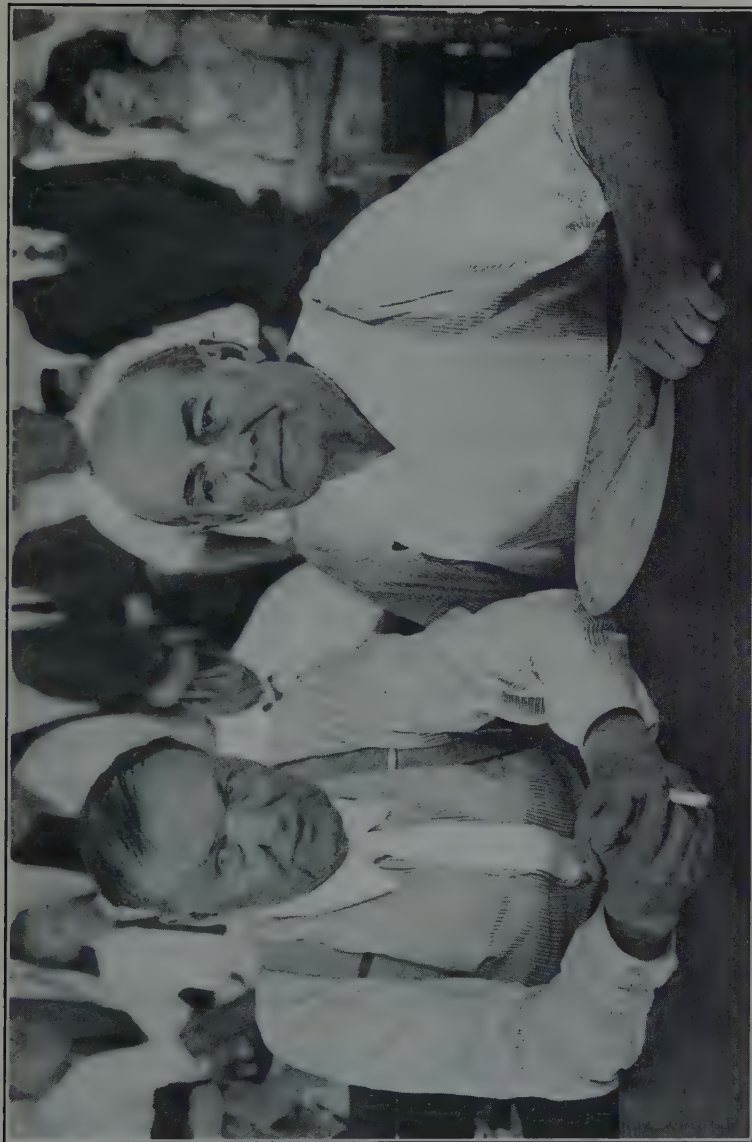


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BRYAN AND DARROW AT DAYTON

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great crowd in the court room was too much weight for the building.

The Bible sign was removed, and Bryan took the witness stand. As Darrow cross-examined Bryan, an airplane flew over their heads. A large crowd gathered under the clump of maple trees in the courthouse yard, filling the wooden benches made of planks, and back of these stood rows of eager listeners. At last they were getting what some of them had come so far to hear. The Judge overruled all objections, because by then it was recognized that everybody wanted a debate and not a trial.

Darrow began by asking Bryan concerning his studies of the Bible. "Do you claim that everything in the Bible should be literally interpreted?" he asked.

"I believe everything in the Bible should be accepted as it is given there," Bryan answered. "Some of the Bible is given illustratively. For instance: 'Ye are the salt of the earth.' I would not insist that man was actually salt, or that he had flesh of salt, but it is used in the sense of salt as saving God's people."

"But when you read that Jonah swallowed the whale—or that the whale swallowed Jonah—excuse me, please—how do you literally interpret that?"

"When I read that a big fish swallowed Jonah—it does not say whale," Bryan insisted.

"Doesn't it? Are you sure?"

"That is my recollection of it. A big fish, and I believe in a God who can make a whale and can make a man and make both do what He pleases." Then there was some discussion as to whether the Bible said whale or big fish.

"You believe that the big fish was made to swallow Jonah?" Darrow asked.

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"I am not prepared to say that; the Bible merely says it was done," Bryan answered.

"You don't know whether it was the ordinary run of fish, or made for that purpose?"

"You may guess; you evolutionists guess."

"But when we do guess, we have a sense to guess right," Darrow snapped back.

"But do not do it often," Bryan insisted.

"But do you believe He made them—that He made such a fish and that it was big enough to swallow Jonah?" Darrow asked.

"Yes, sir. Let me add: One miracle is just as easy to believe as another."

"It is for me," said Darrow.

"It is for me," said Bryan.

"Just as hard?" Darrow inquired.

"It is hard to believe for you, but easy for me," Bryan said. "A miracle is a thing performed beyond what man can perform. When you get beyond what man can do, you get within the realm of miracles; and it is just as easy to believe the miracle of Jonah as any other miracle in the Bible."

"Perfectly easy to believe that Jonah swallowed the whale?"

"If the Bible said so; the Bible doesn't make as extreme statements as evolutionists do."

"That may be a question, Mr. Bryan, about some of those you have known."

"The only thing is," said Bryan, "you have a definition of fact that includes imagination."

"And you have a definition that excludes everything but imagination," Darrow replied.

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Bryan had already written concerning Jonah and the whale in his book, *Seven Questions in Dispute*: "And so with Jonah and the big fish. A God who can make both man and fish, can so direct them as to make fish serve the man. We do not wonder at the salmon of the Pacific Coast that, born in the rivulets of the Columbia and other rivers of the coast, float down the stream, go out into the ocean, fatten themselves, and then at the end of four years return and offer themselves for man's table. If so many fish can be directed by the Almighty to serve all men all the time, is it unreasonable that one particular fish should be used to serve God's purpose in dealing with one man?"

Darrow next brought out that Bryan believed that Joshua made the sun stand still. Attorney-General Stewart then protested that the examination was beyond the issue of the case. Bryan said, "It seems to me it would be too exacting to confine the defense to the facts; if they are not allowed to get away from the facts, what have they to deal with?" "Mr. Bryan is willing to be examined. Go ahead," said Judge Raulston. He was as anxious as any one to hear the debate continue.

From Joshua they went on to whether the authors of the Book of Joshua believed that the sun went around the earth. "I believe," said Bryan, "it was inspired by the Almighty, and He may have used language that could be understood at that time instead of using language that could not be understood until Darrow was born." There was laughter and applause in the courtyard.

Darrow failed to be impressed with an illustration of the ability of man to overcome the force of gravitation which Bryan had used time and time again in his lectures and in his books. "Don't you believe that in order to lengthen the

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day it would have been construed that the earth stood still?" Darrow had asked.

"I would not attempt to say what would have been necessary," Bryan answered. "But I know this, that I can take a glass of water that would fall to the ground without the strength of my hand and to the extent of the glass of water I can overcome the law of gravitation and lift it up. Whereas without my hand it would fall to the ground. If my puny hand can overcome the law of gravitation, the most universally understood, to that extent, I would not set power to the hand of Almighty God that made the universe."

"I read that years ago," said Darrow. Then there was some argument between them as to what the Lord meant in the Book of Joshua.

"Now, Mr. Bryan," Darrow asked, "have you ever pondered what would have happened to the earth if it had stood still?"

"No."

"You have not?"

"No; the God I believe in could have taken care of that, Mr. Darrow."

"You have never investigated that subject?"

"I don't think I have ever had the question asked."

"Or ever thought of it?"

"I have been too busy on things that I thought were of more importance than that."

They took up the question of the flood, and Darrow tried to find out exactly when Bryan thought it occurred, but Bryan refused to give a definite estimate. "What do you think?" Darrow asked. "I do not think about things I don't think about," Bryan answered. "Do you think about

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things you do think about?" asked Darrow. "Well, sometimes," Mr. Bryan admitted, and there was laughter in the courtyard.

Once more Attorney-General Stewart protested against the continuation of the cross-examination.

"These gentlemen," Bryan said, "have not had much chance—they did not come here to try this case. They came here to try revealed religion. I am here to defend it, and they can ask me any question they please."

There was applause. "Great applause from the bleachers," said Darrow.

"From those whom you call 'yokels,'" Bryan snapped at him.

"I have never called them yokels," Darrow said.

"That is the ignorance of Tennessee, the bigotry," Bryan continued sarcastically.

"You mean who are applauding you?" Darrow asked. There was applause.

"Those are the people whom you insult," Bryan shouted.

"You insult every man of science and learning in the world because he does not believe in your fool religion," Darrow shouted.

"I will not stand for that," said Judge Raulston.

"For what he is doing?" Darrow asked angrily.

"I am talking to both of you," said the Judge.

The Attorney-General asked again that the whole examination be stopped, but Bryan wanted to continue. They went back to questions concerning the exact date of the flood, and the survivors in Noah's ark.

"You believe," Darrow asked, "that all the living things that were not contained in the ark were destroyed?"

"I think the fish may have lived," Bryan answered.

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"That all living things outside of the fish were destroyed?"

"What I say about the fish is merely a matter of humor," Bryan explained.

"I understand," Darrow reassured him.

"Due to the fact," said Bryan, "a man wrote up here the other day to ask whether all the fish were destroyed, and the gentleman who received the letter told him the fish may have lived."

They entered into involved calculations in order to ascertain Mr. Bryan's opinion of the age of man since the flood, but Bryan got angry at Darrow's attempt to make him admit that he believed man to be only 4,262 years old. "If I had nothing else to do," Bryan said, "except speculate on what our remote ancestors were and what our remote descendants have been, but I have been more interested in Christians going on right now, to make it much more important than speculation on either the past or the future."

"You have never had any interest in the age of the various races and people and civilization and animals that exist upon the earth today? Is that right?" asked Darrow.

"I have never felt a great deal of interest in the effort that has been made to dispute the Bible by the speculations of men, or the investigations of men," Bryan answered.

"Are you the only human being on earth who knows what the Bible means?" Darrow asked. General Stewart objected, and Judge Raulston sustained the objection. "Don't you know," asked Darrow, "that the ancient civilizations of China are 6,000 or 7,000 years old, at the very least?"

"No," said Bryan, "but they would not run back beyond the creation, according to the Bible, 6,000 years."

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"You don't know how old they are, is that right?" Darrow insisted.

"I don't know how old they are, but probably you do." The audience laughed. "I think you would give the preference to anybody who opposed the Bible, and I give the preference to the Bible."

"And you don't know whether any other religion ever gave a similar account of the destruction of the earth by the flood?"

"The Christian religion has satisfied me, and I have never felt it necessary to look up some competing religions."

"Do you consider that every religion on earth competes with the Christian religion?" Then they discussed comparative religion. "What about the religion of Buddha?" Darrow asked.

"I can tell you something about that, if you want to know."

"What about the religion of Confucius or Buddha?"

"Well, I can tell you something about that, if you would like to know."

"Did you ever investigate them?"

"Somewhat."

"Do you regard them as competitive?"

"No, I think they are inferior. Would you like me to tell you what I know about it?"

"No," said Darrow.

"Well, I shall insist on giving it to you," Bryan said.

"You won't talk about free silver, will you?" asked Darrow.

"Not at all," said Bryan.

Bryan was very much afraid that he would not have a

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chance to tell what he had heard in the East about Confucius and Buddha. "Oh, tell it, Mr. Bryan, I won't object," Darrow finally said. He was not cruel enough to prevent Mr. Bryan from saying again what he had repeated so often in lectures and books. Then Bryan told the court that the difference between Confucius and Christ was that Confucius believed in reciprocity, while Christ believed in doing good to others even if they did not do so to you. To which Mr. Darrow replied: "There is no doubt about that; I haven't asked you that." Then there was an angry, snarling repartee between the two over the number of people on earth at the beginning of the Christian era. When Darrow asked Bryan if he knew how many people there were on earth at that time, he replied, "No, I don't think I ever saw a census on that subject."

"Did you ever try to find out?" Darrow asked.

"When you display my ignorance," said Bryan, "could you not give me the facts, so I would not be ignorant any longer? Can you tell me how many people there were when Christ was born?"

"You know some of us might get the facts and still be ignorant," Darrow said.

"Do you know anything about how many people there were in Egypt 3,500 years ago, or how many people there were in China 5,000 years ago?" asked Darrow.

"No."

"Have you ever tried to find out?"

"No, sir. You are the first man I ever heard of who has been interested." The audience laughed.

"Mr. Bryan, am I the first man you ever heard of who has been interested in the age of human societies and primitive man?"

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"You are the first man I ever heard speak of the number of people at those different periods."

"Where have you lived all your life?"

"Not near you," snapped Bryan. There was laughter and applause.

"Nor near anybody of learning?"

"Oh, don't assume you know it all," said Bryan. The scene resembled strikingly one of those quarrels between small boys as the preliminary skirmish to blacking each other's eyes.

Bryan felt that Darrow was only interested in these things for the purpose of finding arguments against Christianity. "You have never in all your life made any attempt to find out about the other peoples of the earth—how old their civilizations are—how long they had existed on the earth, have you?" Darrow asked.

"No, sir," said Bryan, "I have been so well satisfied with the Christian religion that I have spent no time trying to find arguments against it."

"Were you afraid you might find some?"

"No, sir, I am not afraid now that you will show me any." Then Bryan made this significant statement: "I have all the information I want to live by and to die by."

Bryan then demanded the privilege of saying a few words more about Confucius, for he wished to put into the record what he had said so often before, that Confucius had urged his followers to reward evil with justice, whereas Christ had believed in rewarding evil with good. He also pointed out what he had written and said many times before, that Confucius's followers claimed that their man had invented the Golden Rule, but that the credit really belonged to Christ, for Confucius had only said, "Do not unto others

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what you would not have others do unto you." But Christ had made it positive by urging his followers, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." "There is all the difference in the world," said Bryan, "between a negative harmlessness and a positive helpfulness."

"Now, Mr. Darrow," said Bryan, "you asked me if I knew anything about Buddha."

"You want to make a speech on Buddha, too?" Darrow asked.

"No, sir, I want to answer your question on Buddha."

"I asked you if you knew anything about him."

"I do."

"Well, that's answered, then."

"Buddha—" Bryan insisted.

"Well, wait a minute, you answered the question," Darrow interrupted.

"I will let him tell what he knows," said Judge Raulston.

"All he knows?" asked Darrow.

"Well, I don't know about that," said the Judge.

"I won't insist on telling all I know," said Bryan. "I will tell more than Mr. Darrow wants told."

"Well, all right, tell it, I don't care," said Darrow.

Then Bryan proceeded to give his view of Buddhism, based on what an English ship's carpenter had told him in India. "Buddhism," Bryan announced, "is an agnostic religion." Darrow wanted to know what Bryan meant by agnostic.

"I don't know," answered Bryan.

"You don't know what you mean?"

"That is what 'agnosticism' is—I don't know. When I was in Rangoon, Burma, one of the Buddhists told me that they were going to send a delegation to an agnostic congress

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that was to be held soon at Rome and I read in an official document—”

“Do you remember his name?” Darrow asked.

“No, sir, I don’t.”

“What did he look like, how tall was he?”

“I think,” said Bryan, “he was about as tall as you but not so crooked.”

“Do you know about how old a man he was—do you know whether he was old enough to know what he was talking about?”

“He seemed to be old enough to know what he was talking about.” There was laughter.

“If your Honor please,” Darrow protested, “instead of answering plain specific questions we are permitting the witness to regale the crowd with what some black man said to him when he was traveling in Rang—who, India?”

“He was dark-colored, but not black,” Bryan insisted.

The Judge permitted Bryan to continue. Bryan then gave an exhibition of how his mind accepted sources of information which were congenial to it with utter simplicity and without ever considering their authenticity. He made this statement: “I wanted to say that I then read a paper that he gave me, an official paper of the Buddhist church, and it advocated the sending of delegates to that agnostic congress at Rome, arguing that it was an agnostic religion, and I will give you another evidence of it. I went to call on a Buddhist teacher.”

“I object to Mr. Bryan making a speech every time I ask him a question,” Darrow said.

“Let him finish this answer and then you can go ahead,” the Judge ordered.

“I went to call on a Buddhist priest,” said Bryan, “and

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found him at his noon meal, and there was an Englishman there who was also a Buddhist. He went over as ship's carpenter and became a Buddhist and had been for about six years and while I waited for the Buddhist priest I talked to the Englishman and I asked him what was the most important thing in Buddhism and he said the most important thing was you didn't have to believe to be a Buddhist." It would have been interesting to hear the expression of Mr. Bryan's wrath if, in his presence, an Indian gentleman had recited that he asked the first member of the Methodist Episcopal Church South what the most important thing in Christianity was and he had received the answer, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" That, however, was all Mr. Bryan needed to know about Buddhism, but Mr. Darrow wanted to know more about the Englishman.

"You know the name of the Englishman?" he asked.

"No, sir, I don't know his name."

"What did he look like? What did he look like?" Darrow insisted.

"He was what I would call an average-looking man." Mr. Bryan's powers of description had never been even averagely developed.

"How could you tell he was an Englishman?"

"He told me so."

"Do you know whether he was truthful or not?"

"No, sir, but I took his word for it."

Then the Judge ordered them to get on with the examination, and Mr. Darrow took up with Mr. Bryan the Tower of Babel. There was a slight tiff over God's intentions concerning the people who were building that tower. It was finally brought out that Mr. Bryan believed that all

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the languages of the earth at the present time dated from the time of the Tower of Babel. Then they turned to the creation of the earth.

"Do you think the earth was made in six days?" Mr. Darrow asked.

"Not six days of twenty-four hours," said Bryan.

"Doesn't it say so?" asked Darrow.

"No, sir."

Attorney-General Stewart here interrupted once more to ask, "What is the purpose of this examination?"

"The purpose," Bryan said, "is to cast ridicule on everybody who believes in the Bible, and I am perfectly willing that the world shall know that these gentlemen have no other purpose than ridiculing every Christian who believes in the Bible."

"We have the purpose," said Darrow, "of preventing bigots and ignoramuses from controlling the education of the United States, and you know it, and that is all."

"I am glad to bring out that statement," said Bryan. "I want the world to know that this evidence is not for the view Mr. Darrow and his associates have filed affidavits here stating, the purpose of which, I understand it, is to show that the Bible story is not true."

"Mr. Bryan," said Dudley Field Malone, "seems anxious to get some evidence in the record that would tend to show that those affidavits are not true."

"I am not trying to get anything into the record," Bryan answered passionately. "I am simply trying to protect the word of God against the greatest atheist and agnostic in the United States." There was enthusiastic and prolonged applause from the audience. "I want the papers to know," Bryan continued, "I am not afraid to get on the stand in

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front of him and let him do his worst. I want the world to know." There was great applause which lasted some minutes. "I wish I could get a picture of these claqueurs," Mr. Darrow said calmly.

"The reason I am answering," Bryan shouted, "is not for the benefit of the superior court. It is to keep these gentlemen from saying I was afraid to meet them and let them question me, and I want the Christian world to know that any atheist, agnostic, unbeliever, can question me any time as to my belief in God, and I will answer him."

"I want to take an exception to this conduct of this witness," Darrow said. "He may be very popular down here in the hills. I do not need to have his explanation for his answer." The Christian world was not likely to be ignorant of what Bryan thought, for on the day he took the witness stand the Western Union Telegraph Company reported that it had handled more than 200,000 words, and the various press services carried an additional 50,000 words from their representatives.

There was some further heated argument between Bryan and Dudley Field Malone, who protested against Bryan's branding the defense with Mr. Darrow's personal views of life. Then Mr. Bryan and Mr. Darrow discussed Adam and Eve.

"Mr. Bryan," he asked, "do you believe that the first woman was Eve?"

"Yes."

"Do you believe she was literally made out of Adam's rib?"

"I do."

"Did you ever discover where Cain got his wife?"

"No, sir; I leave the agnostics to hunt for her."

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"You have never found out?"

"I have never tried to find."

"The Bible says he got one, doesn't it? Were there other people on the earth at that time?"

"I cannot say."

"You cannot say. Did that ever enter your consideration?"

"Never bothered me."

"Does the statement, 'The morning and the evening were the first day,' and 'The morning and the evening were the second day,' mean anything to you?"

"I do not think it necessarily means a twenty-four-hour day."

It is interesting that Bryan, who could accept literally Jonah, the whale, Eve, Adam's rib, the flood, the Tower of Babel, insisted that the six days of creation might be interpreted as six periods of any length God had chosen. After all, Mr. Bryan was a practical man; he knew how little he had been able to accomplish in a day, and, perhaps, he felt that God could not quite manage the creation of the universe in six twenty-four-hour periods. However, he insisted that if He wanted to, God could do it—never had Mr. Bryan said anything to disparage the genius of God. Then, too, Bryan and his fundamentalist friends, his papers indicate, had been in correspondence on this very point several years before, and they had decided among them that it would be permissible to believe that perhaps the days mentioned in the Bible were periods; but they did not wish to be dogmatic about it, and the true believer was offered his choice.

Mr. Darrow, however, was more particular about details.

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"Do you think the sun was made on the fourth day?" he asked Mr. Bryan.

"Yes," he answered.

"And they had evening and morning without the sun?"

"I am simply saying it is a period," said Mr. Bryan, running to cover.

"They had evening and morning for four periods without the sun, do you think?"

"I believe in creation as there told," said Bryan, "and if I am not able to explain it I will accept it. Then you can explain it to suit yourself."

Mr. Darrow then took up the temptation of Eve, and he asked Mr. Bryan whether he believed that every woman suffered the pains of childbirth just because Eve had eaten the apple. Bryan, wriggling now like a worried puppy, insisted that if the Bible said it was so, so be it. Then he got angry at Darrow's literal interpretation of the Bible and said:

"Your Honor, I think I can shorten this testimony. The only purpose Mr. Darrow has is to slur at the Bible, but I will answer his question. I will answer it all at once, and I have no objection in the world, I want the world to know that this man who does not believe in a God is trying to use a court in Tennessee—"

"I object to that," Darrow shouted.

"To slur at it," continued Bryan, "and while it will require time, I am willing to take it."

"I object to your statement," said Darrow. "I am examining you on your fool ideas that no intelligent Christian on earth believes."

"Court is adjourned until nine o'clock tomorrow morning," said Judge Raulston.

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The next morning Judge Raulston ruled that the entire examination of Bryan was irrelevant to the case at issue, and there was no more fun. Bryan was disappointed, for he had been anxious to ask Mr. Darrow a few questions. Mr. Darrow then asked the Judge to instruct the jury to find Scopes guilty. When he was asked, earlier in the case, if he intended to put Mr. Scopes on the witness stand, Darrow said, "Your Honor, every single word that was said against this defendant, everything was true." "So he does not care to go on the stand?" asked Judge Raulston. "No, what is the use?" said Darrow. Darrow stated that the defense would rely on a higher court for admission of its expert testimony. The Judge charged the jury that it must not be concerned with the question of whether what Scopes taught was a violation of the story of the divine creation of man, but that it must simply determine whether he taught that man was descended from a lower order of animals. It did not take the jury long to decide that Scopes was guilty, and he was fined \$100.

Then everybody made courteous speeches thanking everybody else. Mr. Bryan, in his little recitation, told the court that the question would never be settled until it was settled right, and he assured the audience, somewhat proudly, that more words had been cabled about this case than about any other case. That, to his mind, illustrated "how people can be drawn into prominence by attaching themselves to a great cause." The people, he said, would decide eventually. Mr. Darrow's view of the case's importance was somewhat different: "I think," he said, "this case will be remembered because it is the first case of this sort since we stopped trying people in America for witchcraft, because here we have done our best to turn back the tide that has sought to force itself

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upon this—upon this modern world, of testing every fact in science by a religious dictum. That is all I care to say.”

Judge Raulston then made his speech, in the course of which he said: “Now we spoke—Dayton has been referred to. That the law—that something big could not come out of Dayton. Why, my friends, the greatest Man that has ever walked on the face of the earth, the Man that left the portals of heaven, the Man that came down from heaven to earth that man might live, was born in a little town, and He lived and spent His life among a simple, unpretentious people.” Then Mr. Arthur Garfield Hays requested permission to send the Judge copies of *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man* with his compliments. There was laughter in the court room, and the Judge said genially, “Yes, yes.” Then there was more laughter, applause, a train whistle blew, interrupting the proceedings for a moment, and Brother Jones, as the Judge called him, pronounced the benediction.

III

The Dayton trial ended on July 21, 1925. Bryan spent a few days in Dayton, correcting the proofs of his last speech, which he had not been given an opportunity to deliver. It contained the arguments with which we are already familiar, and it was issued later in pamphlet form. He also spoke at various meetings in the neighborhood of Dayton against the theory of evolution, and he declared throughout the countryside that the conviction of Scopes was a great victory for Christianity. On Saturday, July 25, he spoke to 8,000 people at the fair grounds at Jasper, Tennessee. He was planning a great national campaign against evolution, for, he told his admirers, “we must strike while the iron is hot.”

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On Sunday, July 26, Mr. Bryan went to speak at Winchester, Tennessee, near Dayton. In the automobile, returning to the home where they were staying in Dayton, Mr. Bryan and Mrs. Bryan had a serious discussion. "Mr. Bryan and I," Mrs. Bryan recorded later, "spoke of his work thus far; his effort to prove the presence, both in the Church and school, of a theory which when taught as fact tended to destroy belief in the truth of the Bible; that having proved the existence of such a situation, he was trying to do three things: first, to establish the right of taxpayers to control what is taught in their schools; second, to draw a line between the teaching of evolution as a fact and teaching it as a theory; and third, to see that teachers proven guilty of this offense should be given an opportunity to resign."

"We spoke of the narrow margin between this perfectly legitimate work as touching the public servant, and an encroachment on individual religious belief which is a sacred domain. We agreed that care must be taken at this point that no religious zeal should invade this sacred domain and become intolerance."

"Mr. Bryan said, 'Well, Mamma, I have not made that mistake yet, have I?' And I replied, 'You are all right so far, but will you be able to keep to this narrow path?' With a happy smile, he said, 'I think I can.' 'But,' said I, 'can you control your followers?' And more gravely he said, 'I think I can.' And I knew he was adding mentally, 'by the help of God.'"

When they reached the house in Dayton, Mr. Bryan said that he thought he would take a nap. Mrs. Bryan was sitting in her wheel-chair on the front porch. It was Sunday afternoon. When it began to be five o'clock she thought that Mr. Bryan should be awakened, so that he might be able to sleep

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that night. She sent the family chauffeur to wake him, and it was found that Mr. Bryan was dead.

The body of William Jennings Bryan was transported to Washington, D. C., for he had expressed the wish to be buried in the national military cemetery at Arlington. En route from Dayton to Washington crowds gathered at the railway stations. At Jefferson City, Tennessee, a quartet of young men stood on a pile of railway ties with hymn books in their hands. As the funeral train drew in they began to sing Bryan's favorite hymn, "One Sweetly Solemn Thought," while an old man held a huge American flag. The train began to move away, and another portion of the crowd began to sing, and the hymn rose in a great chorus:

"One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er,
I am nearer home today
Than I have been before."

Members of the Ku Klux Klan in various parts of the country held memorial services for Bryan, accompanied by the burning of fiery crosses. At the close of the ceremony in Dayton, Ohio, a large cross was raised, bearing the inscription, "In memory of William Jennings Bryan, the greatest Klansman of our time, this cross is burned; he stood at Armageddon and battled for the Lord." Then the cross was burned.

In Washington funeral services were held at the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church and were broadcast by radio throughout this country and Canada. The White House flag was at half-mast, and the State Department was closed at noon. Three companies of uniformed, dismounted artillerymen escorted the body to the national cemetery at



Photo from Wide World Photos.

WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN ON THE DAY OF HIS DEATH

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Arlington. Kelso Rice, the court officer at Dayton, Tennessee, had asked permission to guard Mr. Bryan's body en route to Washington and to the cemetery. The Third Cavalry band played "Lead, Kindly Light" at the grave. There was a prayer and a benediction, and the bugler blew taps. It was pouring rain.

The estate of William Jennings Bryan was estimated to be worth \$1,111,948.50. One of the clauses of his will provided for the establishment, if possible, of an academy for boys where special attention would be "given to citizenship and applied Christianity," and where "room rent should be the same for all rooms, so as to discourage classification according to wealth." "I would like the boys to wear a uniform made of blue and gray," Bryan wrote in his will, "to symbolize the reunion of the North and South." If it should prove impossible to establish such an academy, Bryan requested the distribution of the money he bequeathed for that purpose to schools similar to it, "care being taken to see that the money is given only to schools that are firmly committed to orthodox Christianity, including the making of man by separate act in God's image, the virgin birth and the bodily resurrection of the Savior."

William Jennings Bryan had dropped into death after a violent defense of his belief in Christian immortality, and he—one of the leading peace advocates of the United States, and a veteran of the Spanish-American War—had specially requested that he be buried with military honors at Arlington in the national cemetery.

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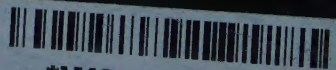
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